Sex Before Sex Ed:
Sexual Practice, Pedagogy, and Affect in Early Modern England

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(English and Women's Studies)
in the University of Michigan
2019

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To Nadia and Ben,
for being my family

and

To Valerie,
for that first smile,
and everything after

Acknowledgements

"I haue seldome seene an honest woman to haue many friends that wil take hir part . . .
You may quickly ghesse a Strumpet by her multitude of friendes."
—Barnabe Riche, *Faultes faults, and nothing else but faultes* (1606)

I am so pleased, at the end of this doctoral pilgrimage, to have had so many friends take my part along the way. After thinking sex for so long and with so many interlocutors, it is the greatest good fortune that I can call myself a true strumpet. I may be apt to see "faultes, faults, and nothing else but faultes" in these pages—all of them of my own making—but I also see the generous and loving marks of a multitude of brilliant people I am lucky to call friends.

I am deeply grateful to, and for, the University of Michigan. That a gay boy from rural Alabama, a first-generation college student, would be allowed to pursue a doctorate in early modern literature and the history of sexuality at such a prestigious university still seems to me like a dream with no bottom. My research has been supported financially by the Rackham Graduate School time and again, including under the auspices of a Pre-Candidacy Research Travel Grant, a Humanities Research Candidacy Fellowship, and a One-Term Dissertation Fellowship. Portions of Chapter One first appeared in the *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*; I am grateful for permission to republish this material here.

The department of English Language & Literature has given me more opportunities than I deserved and counted me family even when I felt the least literary. Oodles of thanks to Danny Hack, Cathy Sanok, Jan Burgess, Senia Vasquez, Denise Looker, Lisa Curtis, and Thea Bude for making it all happen. I have no shame in admiring Gillian White as lyrically as I can manage; I

am so grateful to count her as a mentor, and as a friend. Yopie Prins gave me her time when she could least afford to give it, and for that I will always be thankful. Sarah Ensor is truly one of my people, and I am blessed to know her. I wish I were half as smart and generous as Ingrid Diran. Supriya Nair showed a genuine and selfless interest in my work that I have taken to heart as a model of true academic generosity. I am grateful to Bill Ingram for teaching me to read the hands of the English Renaissance—a skill which has already come in handy. Meg Sweeney generously ran the most productive and enlivening version of a "job market workshop" I could imagine; I wouldn't understand my own work so well if it weren't for her keen eye and guiding hand. My thanks to the Poetry & Poetics Workshop, the Early Modern Colloquium, the Drama Interest Group, and Doing Queer Studies Now for providing such needed collegiality and intellectual stimulation throughout the years. Through various initiatives, the Medieval and Early Modern Studies program has provided a warm and vibrant community for those of us invested in everything "before." Special thanks to my MEMS seminar for training me to read not only *in* but *across,* and to Christian de Pee for steering our way so ably.

The department of Women's Studies has been my heart's home since I arrived in Ann Arbor. I am, unequivocally, a better scholar, a better colleague, and a better *person* for the extraordinary years I have been privileged to spend amongst the fiercest feminists I will ever know. Special thanks: to Dean Hubbs for pushing when I needed a push, and giving when I needed a give; I'm a better queer for it. To Victor Mendoza, for the ferocity of your intellect, and the tenderness of your care. To Sara McClelland for teaching me what feminists *do*, and for your inimitable aura, which comforts me even now. And to Sarah Fenstermaker: your recognition is a feminist praxis I hope to never stop striving for. My thanks to Gayle Rubin for helping me remember, and making my queer life possible. Ruby Tapia makes the world spin round, and

reached out when I was spinning faster. For writing me and righting me, for teaching me to teach: I cannot thank you enough. Jen Nash said yes, and then kept saying it. I'm positively ecstatic to call her friend. And *merci mille fois* to the greatest group of staff the world will ever know: Donna Ainsworth, Heidi Bennett, Sarah Ellerholz, Aimee Germain (and for our dinner in Utrecht: proost!), Patti Mackmiller, Kate Sechler, Shelly Shock, and Michael Gawlik. Y'all are things of joy forever.

Under the auspices of the Community of Scholars fellowship, the Institute for Research on Women and Gender brought me into a room with some of the most incredible feminist scholars I could ever hope to meet. Each of them—Meagen Chuey, Bri Gauger, Jallica Jolly, Tuğçe Kayaal, Peggy Lee, Andrea Rottmann, Sonia Rupcic, Sara Stein, and Sunhay You—is changing the world, and I am honored to have been able to spend a summer learning from them, and from Victor Mendoza, our stalwart leader.

Mike Schoenfeldt has been a tireless advocate and a treasure trove of early modern and poetic knowledge. A scrappy undergraduate, I asked Mike, after a lecture I'd seen him give: "So what's the point?" Again and again, he has reminded me that the point is gratitude and goodwill, and his cup overflows with both. He trusted my instincts and championed my insights when I was filled with nothing but doubt. He told me I was home when I felt far from it, for which I am deeply grateful.

For a variety of reasons, the years I've spent in graduate school have been the most trying of my life. For shepherding me through those years, for her friendship, and for her inimitable guidance and grace, I thank Peggy McCracken endlessly. From the joy of co-piloting a propeller-plane of a class, to the joy of sharing (several) bottles of wine across the globe, Peggy has filled

my life with the music of her voice, the roar of her laugh, and more knowledge and intellectual force than I will ever be worthy of having received. I am so much better for having known her.

I know no brighter light and deeper comfort than Marjorie Rubright. When I asked her to join my dissertation committee from afar, she jumped on board without hesitation, and "afar"—whether Toronto, Northampton, or LA—never felt nearer than when I heard her voice on the phone. My life, both personally and professionally, has blossomed under her careful eye and gentle hand, and I've learned to see that even at those junctures where we differ, our similitude is strikingly salutary. Above all, I am so grateful that she has opened up new worlds within a word I've long considered key: friend.

I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to teach and learn from many, many brilliant undergraduates at Michigan. I extend a special, heartfelt thanks to the incredible students in my "Renaissance Sexualities" course who were more invested in and energetic about the past than I could have ever hoped for, and with whom I was lucky enough to work out many of the ideas in this dissertation.

Shannon Tatum, my favorite affect theorist, has been an honorary member of my dissertation committee since the beginning. She has kept me pushing forward, holding on, taking stock, and figuring out over the years. She is so eminently graceful that she would never expect me to thank her for having saved my life—literally—multiple times. But I have always made it my goal to exceed her expectations, so, Shannon: thank you.

I am also infinitely grateful for a host of high school teachers from the Jefferson County International Baccalaureate School in Birmingham, Alabama, who first taught me to love and respect what could be done with a word after a word after a word. Jennifer Allinder, Gaines Marsh, Becky Dobelstein, Laura Griffo and April Lufkin Miller: you were the first to make my

life possible. Thank you, thank you, thank you. And, especially, Madame Christine George: *pour m'aviez donné le grand cadeau de la langue française, ma deuxième âme, je vous remercierai jusqu'à la fin de mes jours.*

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the many, many librarians who have made this work possible in ways big and small. That I do not, in most cases, even know the names of the people who have made books appear, as if by magic, in my mailbox or on my reading room desk is both testament to the incredible service that librarians provide, and to my own failure as a researcher to make more connections with the people who know more about the books I read than I can ever hope to know. Research for this dissertation has been conducted at the archives of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, the British Library, Rare Books and Special Collections at the McLennan Library at McGill, the Newberry Library, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and at Michigan in the Special Collections and Clements Libraries. Sigrid Cordell has been a boon every step of the way, graciously answering even the stupidest of my inquiries. Special thanks to John Ford of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries whose delightfully British demeanor was not punctured by my request to look for sexual lubricants in the papers under his care, and who shared with me a story about Queen Elizabeth II worth two martinis any day.

The Early Modern Conversions Project quite simply converted me into something better than I was; I am a zealot for its powers and its pleasures. I am indebted in more ways than one can count to Paul Yachnin, the human embodiment of the word "gregarious." It has been a great delight and true honor to have been able to say "Yes, and . . ." to Paul's unending "What if . . ."s. *Merci*, Paul—*bisous*. Stephen Wittek has been a treasured friend and a cheerful champion. If the world were filled with more of him, it would be a better place. Kathleen Perry Long brought me

into the fold before I deserved to be there, and has kept me there with her prodigious and admirable care and intellect. There simply are no words to describe how much I admire Patsy Badir. Her presence and goodwill convinced me to keep going when I could see no way forward.

At every turn, Stephen Spiess has energized me and given me something worth spending that energy on. He is an exemplar of intellectual capacity, scholarly generosity, and enthusiastic amity. The terms of our friendship could fill columns and columns of an early modern lexicon. Steve is one of the reasons I continue to write. Will Fisher has generously opened the doors to his knowledge and his wisdom from the moment we met. He has shared his work with me before it was published, read mine before it was even close to being readable, and been, every step of the way, my imagined and ideal reader. There is nothing prosthetic about my admiration for him. I am grateful for Jim Bromley's stellar scholarship, and his ongoing friendship. Simone Chess has been a gracious and generous mentor, and a true friend. I am constantly in awe of her, and feel very lucky that we get to run in the same queer circles—Midwestern and beyond.

Alicia Andrzejewski has been a close friend from far away. We are both "feelers," and the feelings I have for her are nothing but warmth and gratitude. From the moment we met, Catherine Elliott was an old friend, and I am so glad to know her. Sydnee Wagner has been a model of fierce friendship and fiercer scholarship. She will shake the world up. Thanks, too, to Mario DiGangi for his kindness and for his gracious leadership in our "Queer Affects" seminar at SAA, which fostered the first inklings I had about *As You Like It* and "homoeroticism." I am particularly grateful to Nick Radel, who responded so kindly to those inchoate thoughts. For an unforgettable birthday in Amsterdam that defies reproduction, and for their continued *amicitiae*, I thank John Garrison and Stephen Guy-Bray. Vin Nardizzi has the most glorious laugh, and I am so glad I have gotten to hear it as often as I have, and for his friendship. I am grateful to Mary

Fissell for having shared with me her extensive bibliography of the extant copies of *Aristotle's Masterpiece*. My sincere thanks, too, to my early modern writing group: Ben Moran, Alexandra Carter and Katie Walker. They have all been trusted interlocutors and dear friends. I am particularly grateful to Katie for keeping the wires of connection live over these years, and for our days in Chicago, LA, and DC. And thanks, too, to the Twittersphere, which has proved to be a lifeline, both professional and personal.

I thank Cass Adair for being the inspiration that he is: in life, in politics, and in his sincere and ferocious gentleness. I wish I were more like him. Lauren Benjamin contains worlds: of knowledge, of joy, and of care. I feel very, very lucky to have her in my life. Yeshua Tolle has been an incredible friend and sounding board. All of his ideas are better than mine, and all of mine are better for having known him. I look forward to many years of learning from him. Martha Henzy made a beautiful home with me during the final stretch of this dissertation, and picked me up when I stumbled. I am so grateful that the universe brought her into my life, and that we have many more years of friendship ahead of us. Hayley O'Malley and Andrew Lanham are model intellectuals and model friends. I'm so lucky to have had them by my side, and so grateful to get to be at theirs. I wish I had half their energy! Becky Hixon and Hannah Bredar have both been bright lights in my life, shining through the bleak Ann Arbor clouds. I can't wait to see where they shine next. Channing Matthews has been with me through almost this entire process, and I am so grateful for her. Sheila Coursey has been and remains one of my dearest friends; I will always be trying to emulate her lively and capacious intellect, and her boundless generosity. I thank her, too, for inviting this femmey gay man into a writing group with some of the smartest and most perceptive women in the academy, each of whom I thank for their

fellowship and their incisive reading of my work on multiple occasions: Maia Farrar, Amanda Greene, Anne-Charlotte Mecklenburg, Laura Strout, and Lauren Eriks-Cline.

Lauren deserves her own paragraph because she stands alone in my mind and my heart. I cannot imagine a brighter and more generous friend, mentor, teacher, scholar, and human being. I have learned so much from her over the past few years: how to care for others, how to ask questions, how to be a ballast in the storm. There are few people I admire as much as I admire her. I'm so lucky to have her in my life, and that we get to keep doing this together for years to come.

Tiffany Ball has been a dear friend from the moment I set foot in Michigan. Were it not for Tiffany, in fact, I likely would never have made it to graduate school at Michigan at all. I have learned so much from her example, and from her deep and careful thought about what it means to feel. I am sad that we are currently separated by oceans, but so thankful to have her in my life still, despite the distance.

Melinda Kothbauer has lit my way for years now. Little did I know when I moved into the Telluride House that I would meet a lifelong friend. We may never have run that marathon we promised each other, but we have certainly run a marathon's worth of life together. My heart is full of nothing but love for her. Thank you, Melinda, for keeping me going.

I keep a satchel full of gratitude for my many friends and mentors from my undergraduate years, including David Ainsworth, Brooke Champagne, Andy Crank, Jen Drouin, Dave Madden, Yolanda Manora, Ashley McWaters, Carl Miller, and Bill Ulmer. A few more I must add to the roster of my luminaries: Nic Helms was my Virgil through my undergraduate years, my short-lived acting career, and not a few games of D&D. He remains ever a perspicacious guide. If he could read my mind, he'd know I'm thinking: thanks. Steve Tedeschi

has made me believe in the power of letters, and in myself. My life has been all the better for knowing that the next missive from S. was never too far away, and that, though solitude may suit abstruser musings, his company brings clarity and a calm that vexes nothing but the secret ministry of the lonely wind. Fred Whiting taught me to have the courage of my convictions, and to trust in my desire to disrupt the order of things. I simply would not be where I am were it not for him. Steve Burch saw me before I saw myself, and invited me into the warmth and wisdom of his heart. I can only hope he knows that those of us who love him will carry him around with us forever in the subtext of our lives.

Ben Moran and Nadia Barksdale have given me a home in their home and a home in their hearts. From craft beer to quilting, board games to Maple, they have consistently reminded me that the world has more to offer than books (and then we've gone book shopping anyway). When I felt most like falling, they showed me other ways down the cliffs of Dover. They are more family to me than any person in the world. Ben has been my first and best reader, and he has never let me down or off the hook. Nadia is my oldest friend, and I believe in her the way some believe in God: unequivocally. Together, they are the most fertile soil I know; I'm glad to get to grow with them.

And finally, my greatest debt and my deepest well of gratitude. From the moment I realized that no object could support the weight of my political desires, and that the distant past provided me with an endless supply of questions and increasingly pleasurable conceptual challenges, Valerie Traub has guided my way with a level of intellectual rigor, critical acuity, human tenderness, feminist dedication, and *joie de vivre* that only she could ever manage. Over dinners and drinks, coffees and catch-ups, countless emails and a phone call from the airport that I will never forget, she has proven to be, time and again, more of a mentor and a friend than I

could have ever hoped for. And among the lifetime's worth of thanks I owe her, I thank her and Brenda Marshall for entrusting me from time to time with the care of The Ark, which has two of everything, including women I greatly admire. I knew that I had found my home from her first smile, and I was right: thinking sex with her has been the greatest intellectual pleasure of my life.

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Abstract

Sex Before Sex Ed excavates and analyzes the quotidian practices through which sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English women and men learned how to have sex. Historians of sexuality have long been concerned with understanding how sex and sexuality were imbricated in medical, scientific, religious, economic, aesthetic, and moralizing discourses, and with how various early modern institutions—principally the church, the state, and the stage—leveraged sexuality's discursive reach for their own ends. In short, the history of sexuality has been a history of sexuality's social *meanings*. In this dissertation I shift the scholarly focus away from what sex *meant* and toward how sex was *practiced*. Analyzing a wide variety of written and visual materials—poems, fictional prose, and playscripts; paintings and engravings; autobiographies and diaries; medical treatises and ethnographic writing; and parish and court records—I argue that early modern sexual pedagogy was a fundamentally embodied and affective process. By attending to quotidian, learned sexual practices, I develop an historically portable concept: the "sex life." Colloquial use of the term "sex life" usually takes the form of a value judgment: one's sex life is either good or bad. The "sex life," however, also indexes a whole host of assumptions about how sex weaves itself—mentally, physically, emotionally, and politically—through everyday life.

I analyze early modern sex lives and the pedagogies they entail in two sections, each consisting of two chapters. The first section considers what I call "sexual logistics," that is, how early moderns physically performed the actions they considered "sexual." Chapter 1 analyzes

sexual-logistical knowledge in a wide variety of representations of women guiding men's penises into their vaginas, a practice I call "penis guiding." Here, I analyze lines from Thomas Carew's "A Rapture" (1640) in the sex advice manual known as *Aristotle's Masterpiece* (1690), as well as Thomas Nashe's "A Choise of Valentines" (1592), Pietro Aretino's *Sonetti Lussuriosi* (1527), the anonymous *The School of Venus* (1680), and the memoirs of John Cannon (1740s). Reading the Restoration closet drama *Sodom* (1670s), Chapter 2 turns to the material conditions within which early moderns performed a variety of penetrative sexual acts. There I focus specifically on the use of sexual lubricants, tracing their use past *Sodom* and into earlier city comedies like John Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605) and Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker's *The Roaring Girl* (1611), as well as Richard Eden's English translation of Pietro Martire d'Anghiera's travel narrative, the *Decades of the New World or West India* (1555). The second section of the dissertation then turns to the affects that subtend sexual and romantic relationships, and to the ways that drama can stage such affective negotiations. Chapter 3 analyzes Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (1599) and John Lyly's *Galatea* (1588/92) for the ways in which they represent the affective literacies and miscommunications that structure female-female relationships on the stage. Chapter 4 then turns to John Fletcher's *The Island Princess* (1621) in order to demonstrate how sexual affects produce and are produced by the racism the play stages. In a brief conclusion, I suggest that implicit in my focus on the quotidian practices that constituted the sex lives of the early moderns is a critique of queer theory's insistence on anti-normativity, since a focus on "life" need not be confined to an opposition to norms.

Introduction

"To fuck well is to live well"
—Anonymous seventeenth-century French poem

"To fuck well . . ."

Tucked away into the upper-left-hand corner of Pieter Bruegel's magisterial 1559 *Netherlandish Proverbs* (fig. 1) is a couple arrested mid-embrace (fig. 2). From afar it looks as if they are kissing, but, seen in detail, the way the man's face obscures the woman's makes clear that their lips do not meet. The man leans slightly forward into the woman, whose head is tilted back, as if the man is dipping her or pressing her against a wall. The other figures inside the house interact with the windows that open them to display—affirming, within the world of the painting, the window's materiality by sitting on it or resting their arms on it. This couple, though, seems wholly unaware of the opening that gives us visual access to their tryst. Their eyes are fiercely and forever locked on each other. Each figure's eyebrows are raised in surprise or perhaps exertion, suggesting that, even if their lips fail to make contact, just beyond what we are allowed to see their bodies are not missing each other at all.

Appearing as the personification of the Dutch proverb, "there the broom sticks out"—an indication that the empty house marked by the broom is to be used for a party, something of an equivalent to the English "when the cat's away the mice will play"—this couple is not, strictly speaking, necessary.[1] Given the clear presence of the broom above the house, Bruegel need not

[1] Alan Dundes and Claudia A. Stibbe identify the proverb represented by this nearly-kissing couple as "there the broom sticks out," which refers to a "Dutch custom in which hanging a broom outside the top window of the house signifies that the head of the household is not at home which in turn indicates that a party is in progress or soon will be" (14). This is their translation of the original Dutch: *Daar steekt de bezem uit*.

have painted these bodies in order to include this proverb in his allegory. But the couple's missed kiss enlivens the world Bruegel paints, conjuring up what must have been something of a common—proverbial, even—party pastime. And beyond citing a common sexual practice, the fumbling of Bruegel's couple is the visual emblem of two interrelated sexual questions: what are these two lovers trying to do with their bodies? And where did they learn to do it? Whatever pleasures or disappointments Bruegel's couple may have experienced in that loft, their painted bodies pose sex as a question—a knowledge to be learned, an affect to be discovered, an expertise to be developed over time.

Figure 1: Bruegel the Elder, Pieter. *Netherlandish Proverbs*. 1559, oil on oak panel, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.

Figure 2: *Netherlandish Proverbs,* detail.

Almost a century later, an anonymous French poet will raise similar questions about sex and its representation. Appended to the first edition of Michel Millot's *L'escole des filles* (1667)—a pornographic prose dialogue[2] that depicts a young woman, Fanchon, being taught the ins and outs of sex by her older female friend, Susanne—this anonymous "madrigal" praises Millot's efforts in an idiom vulgar enough to prepare the reader for the language in which they will soon learn about sex from *L'escole*:

> *Autheur foutu d'vn foutu livre,*
> *Escrivain foutu de Cypris,*
> *Qui dans tous tes foutus escrits,*

[2] Whether texts like *The School of Venus* or Nicolas Chorier's *Satyra Sotadica* can be appropriately labeled "pornography" has been the subject of intense debate. Some scholars prefer the terms "erotica" or "erotic writing" in order to highlight the generic and historical differences between modern pornography—which is largely visual and designed specifically to arouse the viewer—and these early modern texts, which were sometimes visual but more often textual, and which, while they presumably aroused many readers, also entered into debates about politics, theology, medicine, and humanism. Other scholars use the term "libertine literature," which highlights the production and dissemination of these works within the socio-aesthetic "school" of early modern libertines like Théophile de Viau and John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. Others, like Valerie Traub (in *The Renaissance of Lesbianism*), deploy the term "obscene" in order to capitalize on the historical links among medicine, literature, and visual imagery—all of which were in danger of being deemed obscene when articulating knowledge of the sexual body. I follow Sarah Toulalan in using the term "pornography" in order, like Traub, to signal conceptual similarities between writing considered "bawdy," "obscene," or "lewd," but also to strategically unsettle the supposed fixity of pornography "as we know it today." For an overview of the key players in this terminological and conceptual debate, see: Moulton, *Before Pornography*; Hunt; Toulalan; and Turner. The authorship of *L'escole des filles* is disputed, though it is traditionally attributed to Millot and Jean L'Ange. I name Millot here because the poem is addressed "A Monsieur Mililot [sic]."

Fais voir que bien foutre est bien vivre.
Cent arguments foutus dont tu fais leçons,
Pour faire foutre en cent façons,
N'eterniseront pas ta plume.
Non ce qui te rendra pour jamais glorieux,
C'est que dans ton foutu volume,
Par une nouvelle coustume,
Ta prose nous fout par les yeux.

Fucking author of a fucking book,
Fucking Cyprian writer,
Who in all your fucking writings
Makes us see that to fuck well is to live well.
A hundred fucking arguments from which you fashion lessons
For fucking in a hundred ways,
Won't make your pen eternal.
No, what will render you forever glorious,
Is that in your fucking volume,
In a new manner,
Your prose fucks us in our eyes.[3]

This bawdy verse is surprisingly difficult to translate into English. My overly literal translation here, rendering every form of "foutre" into a form of "fuck," accentuates the poem's relentless obscenity, but also flattens the broad field of meanings contained in the word "foutre," which, according to the *Grand Robert de la Langue Française*, can mean both "forniquer" (to fornicate) and "faire" (to do, to make). The late seventeenth century seems to be something of an historical pivot point for "foutre," which is used to mean "to fornicate" as early as the thirteenth century, but only begins to take on its figurative meaning, "to do"—a figurative meaning that, according to the *Grand Robert*, takes "the male sexual act . . . as the prototype of all action"—during this period.[4] Where "*Escrivain foutu de Cypris*" might be rendered, as I have written above, "fucking

[3] BnF ENFER-112, p. Xxiv. Hereafter cited as "*L'escole*." Unless otherwise noted, all English translations from the French are my own.
[4] See the entry "II" under "foutre, v. tr."

Cyprian writer," it denotes more generally a spoiled identity—"rotten writer from Cyprus," say. The madrigal's author is at their punning best when they write that Millot's prose fashions lessons "*Pour faire foutre en cent façons*." While *L'escole des filles* does indeed offer lessons "for fucking in a hundred ways," the French line can also be read to comment on the madrigal's own lessons "for making *foutre* in a hundred ways," or, even more broadly, as a clever little *ars poetica*, "for making making" or "for doing doing" in a hundred ways. Caustic as it is, then, within this punning context "*Ta prose nous fout par les yeux*" appears here as a form of praise: Millot, the poet claims, fucks us as his words enter into our minds—and our libidos—through our eyes. The madrigal's author, it seems, delighted in Millot's prose, finding the experience of reading Susanne and Fanchon's tête-à-tête as thrilling as sex itself.[5]

But it is far from clear that Millot was himself more concerned with the style of his prose, as his anonymous celebrant suggests, than he was with the content of the "lessons / for fucking in a hundred ways" that his text sets out. Where the poem's author seems most concerned with the literary acrobatics of employing the word "foutre" in as many guises as they can, Millot is far more concerned with laying out a sexual how-to as clearly as possible. He briefly apologizes in his introductory epistle, for instance, to the "girls" reading his text for so often making use of the verbs "fuck" and "ride" ("chevaucher") instead of some other, more decorous terms. He says he does so not, as the madrigal will claim on the next page, for literary panache, but because those are the more commonly used terms ("ils sont plus en usage"), and thus are more useful in his efforts to describe common sexual practice.[6] Millot is even careful to have his characters account for their own bawdy language. When Fanchon bristles at Susanne's use of the word prick

[5] My thanks to Peggy McCracken and Blake Gutt for enlivening my understanding of the many layers of the word *foutre*; any infelicities in translation, of course, remain my own.
[6] *L'escole*, p. Xxiii.

("vit")—"Oh, cousin, you cuss!" she exclaims ("Ah vous jures ma Cousine")—Susanne chides her. "Well aren't you tiresome," she says. "You had really better get rid of your qualms [about dirty language] if you want me to tell you something thrilling."[7] Susanne then warns Fanchon of the apparently offensive words she will be employing to describe this "thrilling" situation: "ass, cunt, prick, & stones" ("cul, con, vit, & couillons").[8]

For the madrigal's author, all those lessons for "fucking in a hundred ways" that Millot's dialogue lays out are beside the point. Why bother knowing how to have sex when reading about it is just as good? But for Fanchon, knowing how is precisely the point. "Excuse my ignorance, Cousin," she says to Susanne, but "please tell me a little bit about what your husband does to you when you lie together so that I won't be such a novice when mine wants to do the same with me."[9] In the 1680 English translation of Millot's dialogue, the sexual anxieties of this passage are rendered even more explicit. Departing slightly from the original French, the translator writes: "pray tell me what your Husband doth to you when he lyes with you, for *I would not willingly altogether appear a Novice,* when I shall arrive to that great happiness of being fucked."[10] The desire for sexual know-how that is articulated in these lines is underwritten, especially in the English passage, by an anxious affect, a desire to "not willingly altogether appear a Novice." A desire, that is, not only to not *be* so ignorant, but to not be *seen* as so ignorant. This is not a desire to be "fuck[ed] in" the eyes by prose, but a desire to learn the

[7] *L'escole*, p. 13. "hé que tu est importune & qu'il faut bien vraiement que tu ostes tous ces scrupules, si tu veux que je te die quelque chose dont tu seras tantost ravie."
[8] *L'escole*, p. 13. I have opted in my translation of the word "couillons," which means "testicles," for the early modern term "stones." The modern English slang equivalent of "couillons" would be "balls."
[9] *L'escole*, 37. "Je vous demande pardon, ma Cousine, c'est que je suis ignorante, mais . . . dites moy un peu je vous prie, comme votre mari vous fait quand vous estes couché ensemble, afin que je ne sois pas si novice quand le mien me voudra faire de mesme."
[10] Mudge, 17, emphasis mine. All references to *The School of Venus* are to the edition printed in Bradford Mudge's *When Flesh Became Word* (OUP 2004).

lessons of what to do with one's body when one arrives at that "great happiness of being fucked"—an arrival that might take place, say, in the loft of a home whose door is marked with an inviting broom. The madrigal's author may be too cool for Millot's school, but Bruegel's fumbling couple and the redoubling of Fanchon's sexual anxieties as they translate across the English channel suggest that there were others in northern Europe who may have wanted all the lessons they could get.

Given the emphasis on "sexual knowledge" in the history of sexuality, inherited in large part from Foucault, one might assume that scholars would have quite a lot to say in response to Fanchon's request. But for the past few decades the history of sexuality—not to mention its kissing (and wrestling) cousin, queer theory—has aligned itself much more readily with the author of the "fucking" madrigal than with Susanne, Fanchon's more practical-minded tutor. Historians of sexuality have shared with the madrigal's author a primary interest not in on-the-ground sexual practice, but in sexuality's emergence in language as a system or structure, and in particular in the discourses set in motion by subjectifying institutions like the church and the state. Valerie Traub has recently claimed in her omnibus overview of the current state of the history of sexuality that "the dominant preoccupation of most historical scholars (literary critics as well as historians) . . . has been to explore erotic *attitudes, affects, identities,* and *ideologies*." This has kept us, she goes on to argue, from "confront[ing] what happens to interpretative practice when we look for the details of actual sexual practices."[11] Thus, to claim, as I will throughout this dissertation, that "sexual knowledge" might name something practical, something one takes with one into the bedroom (or the loft, or the park, or the bawdy house), is

[11] Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 14, emphasis in the original.

eccentric to the norms of a field that claims that sexuality is: an instinct,[12] but also a discourse;[13] just one element among others in a "symbolic universe,"[14] but also *the* node of a "crisis of . . . definition;"[15] a "gender position,"[16] but also *not* a gender position;[17] an orientation,[18] or maybe an identification,[19] but also the friction created by disidentification and difference[20]—not to mention an affect,[21] a mode of engagement in the public sphere,[22] "a limit of the civilizing process" which "modifies social thought,"[23] a form of politics,[24] a form of history,[25] "a particular instance of semiosis,"[26] and an organizing principle of kinship.[27] Faced with such a dizzying list of competing conceptions of "sexuality," a scholar new to the fields of the history of sexuality and queer theory—and, in particular, attentive to their moments of overlap and disconnection—might well respond as Fanchon does to Susanne: "Oh!" she says, "I couldn't possibly retain all of that. Does a girl really need to know all these things, cousin?" "Et bien d'autres encore," Susanne responds. "All that and then some." [28]

Still, things are not quite so dire for the practically-minded Fanchons of the academy—

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[12] Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*.
[13] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1*.
[14] Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, 21.
[15] Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, 1.
[16] Goldberg, *Sodometries*, 61.
[17] Traub, "Desire and the Difference It Makes" in *Desire and Anxiety*.
[18] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*.
[19] Halperin, *How to do the History of Homosexuality*.
[20] Gil, *Before Intimacy*.
[21] Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men*. See also Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings*.
[22] Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City*. See also Berlant and Warner, "Sex in Public."
[23] Hammill, *Sexuality and Form*, 1, 5.
[24] Sanchez, *Erotic Subjects*.
[25] Lanser, *The Sexuality of History*.
[26] de Lauretis, *The Practice of Love*, xix.
[27] Rubin, "The Traffic in Women." See also Sedgwick, *Between Men*.
[28] *L'escole,* p. 24. Fanchon: "Ho, ho, je ne pourrois retenir tout cela, & faut il ma Cousine qu'vne fille sçache toutes ces choses?"

among whom, I should say, I count myself. A few scholars have recently begun to think sex differently, turning their questions away from institutional discourses and toward the performance of sex itself. In their introduction to *Sex Before Sex: Figuring the Act in Early Modern England* (2013), James M. Bromley and Will Stockton argue that "the sex act . . . remains an undertheorized and underhistoricized concept."[29] They and their contributors thus offer a closer "scrutiny" to early modern representations of sexuality "at the level of the act."[30] Ranging from analyses of tropes of impotency in pornography to collations of references to anilingus in early modern drama, the essays in *Sex Before Sex* challenge historians of sexuality to attend not only to sexual discourses, but also to sexual practices.[31] Even as they are attentive to matters of language and literary form, these scholars have opened up space for taking seriously the practical and epistemological content of the sexual "lessons / For fucking in a hundred ways" that are offered by the texts they analyze.

One of the contributors to this volume, Will Fisher, has written a series of essays that uncover and analyze a variety of sex acts in early modern England—a variety that includes, at least according to *The School of Venus*, "tickling, Arse-shakings, cringes, sighings, sobbs, groans, faintings away, hand-clappings, and sundry other caresses."[32] Fisher's attention to individual sex acts illuminates, among other things, the ways in which early moderns thought of sex in terms of discrete acts. Some of these sex acts, such as cunnilingus, are still practiced today. Others, such as chin chucking—the practice of erotically stroking one's partner's chin—are hardly recognizable now as sex. Taken together, Fisher's essays demonstrate that attending to

[29] Bromley and Stockton, 10.
[30] Bromley and Stockton, 2.
[31] See the essays by Melissa J. Jones and James M. Bromley for impotency in pornography and anilingus, respectively.
[32] Mudge, 51. See Fisher, "Wantoning," "The Erotics of Chin Chucking," and "Straying lower."

how early moderns used their bodies with each other, and how they described the actions they performed, can offer scholars access to the mental and physical landscape of early modernity—landscapes that a focus solely on institutions like the church, the state, and medicine would render invisible.[33] Though distinct in its philological practice, Jeffrey Masten's *Queer Philologies: Sex, Language, and Affect in Shakespeare's Time* (2016) is also explicitly concerned with the ups and downs of sexual practice: the foundations and fundaments that weave themselves through the tops and bottoms of sex (in "Is the Fundament a Grave?"), and the sexual topping and tupping that then wrap themselves around gender and race (in "All Is Not Glossed").

In *Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns* (2015), Traub extends the insights of these other scholars into a potentially field-organizing dictum: "*sex may be good to think with, not because it permits us access, but because it doesn't*."[34] Sex is epistemologically opaque to scholars, Traub argues, because it is epistemologically opaque to sexual practitioners. "Sexual knowledge is difficult," she writes, "because sex, as a category of human thought, volition, behavior, and representation, is, for a variety of reasons, opaque, often inscrutable, and resistant to understanding."[35] For Traub, thinking sex epistemologically means resting in, rather than trying to overcome, this difficulty in order to understand "*how* we know as much as *what* we know" about sex.[36] While I share Traub's desire to linger in the impasses sex sets before us and to focus on *how* we know sex, it seems important to note that that "how" can operate at many different levels of analysis, as well as of pedagogical practice.

[33] Though it is primarily focused on discursive abstractions like "the modern autonomous subject," Thomas Laqueur's *Solitary Sex* also offers an historical tour of both premodern and modern conceptions—and condemnations—of masturbation.
[34] Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 4, emphasis in the original.
[35] Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 3.
[36] Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 34, emphasis in the original.

Traub names two of these levels of analysis when she writes that "epistemology as I conceive it is concerned with the *categories* and *concepts* by which early moderns, and scholars of early modernity, think sex."[37] The warrant for Traub's focus on the categorical and the conceptual comes in her claim that "what is true at the level of signifying systems is true as well for individual subjects and the specific conditions of communication in which they participate."[38] To support this claim, Traub cites Ben Saunders, who argues in *Desiring Donne: Poetry, Sexuality, Interpretation* (2006) that "for any given individual, the social significance of an erotic image, text, or practice is inseparable from that same individual's prior conceptions of, among other things, sexual difference and relative power relations."[39] Though they both refer to "individuals," Traub and Saunders are concerned explicitly with *critics* and *historians* who are attempting to interpret the past, and thus must rely in their interpretations on the categories that are available to them at any given moment. The use of the phrase "individual subjects," though, implies that the situation of the critic is the same as the situation of the sexual actor—that both are bound by, and thus function *the same as*, "signifying systems." This seems to me to be a critical slippage worth pausing over. Are the situations of historians of sexuality and historical sexual actors the same? Some scholars, primarily queer theorists, have answered that question in the affirmative, advocating for an erotic criticism that looks to eroticism as both its object and its methodological guide.[40] I am not so sure.

The categorical is, clearly, one level at which knowledge is bound and produced, since

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[37] Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 9, emphasis in the original. Other scholars, like Jeffrey Masten and Stephen Spiess, who approach sexual knowledge even more philologically than Traub does, share her categorical and conceptual focus. See Masten, *Queer Philologies*, and Spiess, *Shakespeare's Whore*.

[38] Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 10.

[39] Saunders, 114.

[40] Traub discusses—and at some points, critiques—these critics at length in her chapter, "Sex in the Interdisciplines." See especially pp. 132-137.

categories offer rubrics within which one might know this or that. And one may indeed find criticism an erotic act, eliciting as it does a whole range of desires and emotions—pleasurable or otherwise. But the categorical is only one level at which we come to know what we know. In the case of sex, for instance, there are also more direct, practical modes of pedagogy—learning what to do with one's body, say, or how to describe and interpret the emotions and actions that are bound up in any given tryst. The center of Traub's book, a section entitled "Scenes of Instruction; or, Early Modern Sex Acts," does set out to explicate the more local epistemological difficulties that invariably accompany sex acts. There, she focuses not on the archival difficulties that attend historians of sexuality, or the critical embarrassments that often follow those of us who speak sex in the supposedly austere halls of academia, but on the ways that early moderns themselves and early modern lexicons seem to deflect attempts to know sex. Sometimes, as Traub demonstrates in her reading of Richard Brome's *The Antipodes*, requests for knowledge are denied or endlessly deferred; and sometimes, she shows, language itself is intractably obscure, as in Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*, where the housekeeper Face enjoins Dol Common to "firk, like a flounder"—whatever that means.[41] But where Traub's primary focus is on the epistemological opacity of sex, on the *difficulties* of attaining sexual knowledge, I have tried in this dissertation to follow Fanchon's request for sexual knowledge toward its consummation. While I do often focus on the critical concepts that have rendered historical sexual practice invisible—or at least more opaque than it was to begin with—my primary goal has been to excavate and explicate the quotidian practices through which early moderns (sometimes) overcame the epistemological impasses of sex.

[41] For Traub's reading of Brome's play, see her chapter "The Joys of Martha Joyless" (*Thinking Sex* 103-124). For her reading of *The Alchemist*, and the wider exploration of the early modern sexual lexicon that it launches, see "Talking Sex" (*Thinking Sex* 171-226).

And the primary tool they had for overcoming this impasse? Their bodies. Thanks to decades of work by feminist scholars, we know quite a bit about what early moderns knew about the body.[42] This dissertation flips that feminist script by showing how early moderns *used* their bodies to know themselves and the world around them. To do this, I turn to what the literary critic and cultural historian Bruce Smith has called "historical phenomenology." In a series of books and essays, Smith has laid out the contours of an historical phenomenological practice that attends to the bodily practices and sensory experience of early moderns. "The basic premise of phenomenology," he writes, "is simple: you cannot know anything apart from the way in which you come to know it. That applies to both historical subjects and contemporary critics."[43] "All human knowledge," he writes elsewhere, "is embodied knowledge and hence *felt* knowledge."[44] But a specifically *historical* phenomenology, he claims, "directs attention to the sentient body" that is "positioned among the cultural variables" that have been analyzed by "new historicism and cultural materialism." Similarly, for queer theorists who are not early modernists, Sara Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology* has opened up myriad questions about the phenomenology of sexuality, including investigations of how normative scripts of gender, race, and sexuality impinge on the felt experience of the body. Her focus, though, is less on the epistemological implications of thinking phenomenologically, and more on the theoretical and social affordances of thinking in terms of phenomenological *orientations*—whether spatial, sexual, or national.

Following Smith, other early modernists have also turned to the sensate as an entry point into historical phenomenology. Elizabeth Harvey writes that "touch is a sense that mediates

[42] See, for instance, the work of Gail Kern Paster and Michael Schoenfeldt on humoralism, and Margaret Ferguson and Traub's work, in *The Renaissance of Lesbianism*, on the hymen.
[43] Smith, "Premodern Sexualities," 325.
[44] Smith, *Key*, 6, emphasis in the original.

between the body of the subject and the world."[45] The essays in her volume, *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture* (2003), probe those relations between the subject and the world, between the body and its environments, and between feeling and knowing. Similarly, Holly Dugan's *The Ephemeral History of Perfume: Scent and Sense in Early Modern England* (2011) turns to olfaction as "a rich archive of everyday life in the past,"[46] since smell, she argues, stages relationships "among materiality, perception, and representation."[47] While the sensate plays an incredibly important role in sexual experience, unlike these historical phenomenologists, I am not concerned in this dissertation with the senses per se, but with the *gestalt* knowledges—including, as Smith points out, the "*felt* knowledges"—individuals developed and held about their own bodies.

Because of its focus on the individual bodies of historical sexual subjects, historical phenomenology is more equipped to respond to Fanchon's request for practical sexual knowledge than is an epistemological practice focused on the discursive categories of knowledge at a particular historical moment. My historical phenomenology is, nevertheless, still an epistemological practice. Though none of the scholars cited above who have analyzed early modern sex acts have explicitly marked their practice as phenomenological, and though—despite Smith's focus on sexuality in early iterations of his method—historical phenomenologists have been largely unconcerned with sexual practice, these two methodologies, in my project, comprise a complementary pair that enables me to approach the quotidian sexual practices of early moderns *and* the sexual knowledges that undergird those practices.[48]

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[45] Harvey, *Sensible Flesh,* 14.
[46] Dugan, 6.
[47] Dugan, 2.
[48] For Smith's focus on sexuality, see "Premodern Sexualities" and "L[o]cating the Sexual Subject."

Coordinating these two otherwise disparate fields of inquiry, *Sex Before Sex Ed* approaches both the epistemology and the phenomenology of sex. My central questions are these: how did early moderns learn how to have sex? What, that is, were the *practices* through which they acquired the *knowledges* required to "have sex," in the broadest possible sense? What did they have to know in order to "do it"? What did it feel like to know something about sex? And what sorts of knowledges might the feelings that weave through sexual relationships hold? Pursuing these questions, I argue that early moderns engaged in quotidian sexual pedagogies that were at once practical and affective. Where Fanchon asks Susanne for a knowledge of how to fit her body with her partner's body—a sexual "know-how" that I take up in this dissertation's first two chapters—characters in other works of early modern imaginative literature learn about sex by noticing, naming, theorizing, and changing their own emotions and influencing the emotions of their sexual partners—a sexual "feel-how" that I take up in the final two chapters. Furthermore, this dissertation takes an explicitly queer feminist stance toward sex and sexuality, both in its primary focus on women (and their relationships with both women and men), and in its investment in marking and critiquing the differential vectors of power that shape sexual relationships and circumscribe the life possibilities of women. Despite hegemonic early modern cultural scripts which dictated that women should be chaste, silent, and obedient, I argue that early modern women were in fact tasked with bearing and disseminating a wide variety of sexual knowledges, both practical and emotional.

". . . is to live well"

If, in the words of the poem preceding *L'escole des filles*, "to fuck well is to live well," then sex in early modernity is a question of life and its vibrancy. My interest in uniting historical

phenomenology and sexual epistemology is not driven merely by the conceptual resonances within the sorts of questions asked by academics pursuing one or the other of these approaches. It is also, and more importantly, driven by the recognition that sex is one of the ways in which people render their lives livable. Sex, that is, is something people *do* in their daily lives, and thus something they know *how* to do. Doing and knowing may not always align in a perfect sequence where knowledge precedes and produces action. We might often do before we quite know how. We may not always know that we are doing it—whatever "it" is—when we are doing it. We might also want something without doing it, and thus sometimes we might "know it" long before we do it, if we ever do. But, for most people, our experience of sexuality is some combination of knowing it and doing it.[49] And since sexuality is a key part of lived experience for so many people—both then and now, as "to fuck well is to live well" suggests—a fuller understanding of the lived experience of early moderns will need analytic tools that can account for these embodied sexual knowledges.

This dissertation offers one such tool: the concept of the "sex life." Colloquial use of the term "sex life" usually takes the form of a value judgment: one's sex life is either "good" or "bad." These seemingly simple value judgments, though, are actually complex interpretive acts that cite a whole host of assumptions about the ways that sex weaves itself—mentally, physically, emotionally, and politically—through everyday life. These assumptions can provide scholars with a useful guide for approaching the quotidian experience of sexuality. Propositions embedded in the concept of the "sex life" include the following:

[49] This is true even for those who identify as asexual: given the compulsory sexuality of both early modern English and contemporary American culture, "knowing it" may entail knowing that others will expect one to (want to) have sex, and "doing it" may entail refusing such expectations.

1. Sex lives are embodied. Unlike sexual discourses, which are primarily linguistic or textual, sex lives require sexual actors and sexual actions—and thus sexual bodies.
2. This means that sex lives are material, and thus structured by material conditions—including physiological conditions, abilities, and morphological differences.[50]
3. That sex lives are embodied also means that the social vectors that circumscribe the actions of some bodies and not others also differentially circumscribe the sexual possibilities of those bodies: women's sex lives are, because of the social significations of their bodies, *structurally* different from men's; black women's sex lives are *structurally* different from white women's, etc.
4. The embodiment of sex lives also means that they take place in space over time.[51] The sex life of a given sexual actor thus changes over time as that actor moves between spaces, stages of life, partners, etc.
5. That sex lives are embodied does not mean, however, that they do not involve abstraction. Indeed, the "life of the mind" is a key component of a sex life. Fantasies, reflections, affects, questions, projections, theorizations: these are all fundamental elements of the quotidian experience of sexuality. Sexual actors do not merely perform sexual actions; they also *think about* sex. Asking, "how does she feel about me?" is, as I demonstrate in chapter three, just as important to the sex life as is asking, "how might we fit our bodies together?"

[50] For an exemplary reading of the ways that bodily ability shapes sexual possibility, see Farr.

[51] See Smith, "L[o]cating," for a thorough breakdown of the importance of space and time to an historical phenomenological approach to sexuality. For the importance of space, see Orlin, *Locating Privacy* and Crane, "Illicit Privacy."

6. Sex lives are not synonymous with sexual orientations or identities, nor are they innate or immutable. In fact, given proposition four above, one constitutive element of the sex life is that it is always subject to change. This differentiation between sexual "orientation" or "identity" and the "sex life" can allow scholars to bracket concerns about the potential anachronism of imposing modern sexual or identitarian rubrics onto premodern subjects while nevertheless still asking how individual early moderns understood themselves as sexual beings.
7. These latter questions are possible because, while distinct from sexual identities, sex lives are nevertheless *individual*. This does not mean, however, that they are radically relative—that everyone's sex life is fundamentally different from everyone else's. There are, as I will detail throughout this dissertation, discernable patterns of sexual practice, pedagogy, and affect at any given historical moment. But the individuality of sex lives does mean that the discursive structures of sexuality will carry different weights in different people's lives. For one person, the Church's injunction against sodomy might be a life-organizing principle—a righteous form of sexual self-fashioning, for instance, or a constant anxiety about the possibility of living in sin.[52] At the same time, the Church's injunction against sodomy might not be a particularly important factor of another person's sex life—even another person whose coordinates on the grid of social power might seem almost identical.

As descriptions of people's lived experience, the propositions I have outlined may seem painfully obvious. But as methodological guides for the history of sexuality, they are, I submit, novel. It is not as if historians of sexuality have not thought or written about individual

[52] See, for instance, Bray, "The Curious Case of Michael Wigglesworth."

differences in sexual proclivity and practice, of course; but such writing normally takes the form of a chronicle of exceptionalism—as is the case, for instance, in scholarship on James I or the Earl of Castlehaven.[53] The propositions embedded in the concept of the "sex life," I contend, can help scholars move away from such exceptionalist models and toward broader claims about historical sexual practice.

Working in the Middle

Broader claims, but not the broadest. One of the most important affordances of the concept of the sex life is that it differentiates between the macro-level sexual discourses that have been the primary object of analysis for the history of sexuality and the not-so-macro level sexual practices that historical subjects engaged in on a daily basis. The history of sexuality's focus on sexual discourses is a direct inheritance from one of its most influential practitioners: Michel Foucault. In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault outlined the historical proliferation of sexual discourses across the modern period; in the two volumes that followed it, he shifted his attention away from modern legal, theological, and psychoanalytic demands to speak sex and toward classical and late antique philosophical regimes of self-discipline and self-imagining. In the space between these two foci—both historically and epistemologically—lies a vast field of sexual knowledge and quotidian sexual practice that is assimilable neither to the discursive sexualities of the modern period nor to the coordinated sexual ethics of the ancients. As Foucault himself wrote in *The Order of Things*, "discourse . . . is so complex a reality that we

[53] On King James, see Michael Young, *King James VI and I and the History of Homosexuality*. On the Earl of Castlehaven, see Cynthia Herrup, *A House in Gross Disorder*.

not only can, but should, approach it at different levels and with different methods."[54] Though I have tried in this dissertation, whenever possible, to bracket discursive considerations in favor of practical ones, when I do turn to sexual discourse, my goal has been to approach that discourse "at different levels and with different methods" than those with which it has traditionally been approached. I approach sex not at the macro-level of "the social," nor the micro-level of the individual sex act performed at a specific place and time. Instead, I attempt to bridge the conceptual gap between the micro and the macro and to focus on a middle analytic level of individually accumulated sexual knowledges—what I refer to as the "meso" level. The level not of sex acts (the micro), or sexuality, understood socially or culturally (the macro), but of the accumulated knowledges that constitute the sex life (the meso).

This is precisely the one sort of analysis Foucault could not brook. "If there is one approach that I do reject, however," he goes on to say in *The Order of Things*, "it is that (one might call it, broadly speaking, the phenomenological approach) which gives absolute priority to the observing subject, which attributes a constituent role to an act, which places its own point of view at the origin of historicity—which, in short, leads to a transcendental consciousness."[55] I share Foucault's resistance to "transcendental consciousness," and in my own phenomenological approach to early modern sexuality I have tried to place not myself, the "observing subject," but rather *early moderns* "at the origin of historicity." It will be clear throughout these pages that I am heavily indebted to Foucault's work. I do not agree, however, that "the historical analysis of scientific discourse"—"scientific" understood broadly to mean any organized field of knowledge—"should, in the last resort, be subject, not to a theory of the knowing subject, but

[54] Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xiv.
[55] Foucault, *The Order of Things*, xiv.

rather to a theory of discursive practice." To my mind, "a theory of discursive practice" without "a theory of the knowing subject" is like having a recipe for which you lack the ingredients: lots of fun to think about, not so fun to eat.

More germane to my own thinking is Foucault's contemporary, Pierre Bourdieu, whose *Outline of a Theory of Practice* offers the following insight:

> So long as the work of education is not clearly institutionalized as a specific, autonomous practice, and it is a whole group and a whole symbolically structured environment, without specialized agents or specific moments, which exerts an anonymous, pervasive pedagogic action, the essential part of the *modus operandi* which defines practical mastery is transmitted in practice, in its practical state, without attaining the level of discourse.[56]

The sexual pedagogies that I analyze in this dissertation are transmitted, as Bourdieu suggests, "in practice . . . without attaining the level of discourse." Though there is lots of learning and teaching in the texts that I submit as evidence, the roles of student and teacher are rarely fixed. While one person might initiate a particular pedagogical interaction as a teacher, they often quickly find themselves learning more from their student than they teach them. Sexual pedagogy in early modern England works less through "institutionalized" scripts enacted by "specialized agents" and more as a "pervasive," if not necessarily "anonymous," "pedagogic action." Early moderns learned how to have sex by doing it—and talking about it, writing about it, reading about it, and drawing, painting, and engraving it. And "having sex" is not merely a series of physical actions (though, as my first chapter will show, there is nothing "mere" about a series of physical actions). It is also a complex practice of desiring, fantasizing, imagining, moving, reacting, wondering, asking, replying, demanding, resisting, giving, and taking. Though any given sexual encounter might be more or less emotionally charged—early moderns could, and

[56] Bourdieu, 87.

did, have what we might refer to now as casual, "meaningless" sex—the texts that I read in this dissertation suggest that sex could elicit a whole network of emotions, both positive and negative. Thinking with early modern sex lives thus means considering not only what early moderns did with their bodies, but also how they felt while they were doing.

But given that these sexual practices and pedagogies do not, to use Bourdieu's words, "[attain] the level of discourse," how can literary critics and historians, methodologically bound as we are to the texts (and material cultures) of the past, even begin to piece together this amorphous mass of quotidian sexual practice? My answer to this question is largely borne out in the individual readings that follow. By way of a preview, though: I have attempted to overcome this methodological barrier by *triangulating* among texts and the sexual practices they index. As historicist critics have done for decades, I read across various texts, juxtaposing, for instance, fictional pornography with autobiographical journals, poems with sexual advice manuals, and playscripts with ethnographic travel writing. My practice differs from historicist practice, however, in that my goal is not to paint a picture of the discourses that emerge from these acts of critical connection, but to paint a picture of the material practices that undergird those discourses. For instance, when I read medical treatises or legal cases—which I do sparingly—I read them not for what they have to say about medicine or law, but for what they have to say about how people use their bodies. I am less interested in definitions or convictions of sodomy, for example, than I am in the (very few) extant accounts of men having anal sex with men. To extract these more material, practical knowledges from historical texts, I have sometimes aligned a variety of texts that, despite their generic, linguistic, and national differences, nevertheless feature strikingly similar descriptions of sexual practice. At other points, I have chosen to linger over a small set of generically similar texts—the playscripts of two Elizabethan romantic comedies, for

instance—in order to illuminate the common generic features that suggest what early moderns took for granted about sexual practice. While any given literary genre will only be able to help scholars understand certain things about historical practice, my guiding principle throughout this dissertation is that working across genres can help to stitch together the larger whole of early modern sex lives.

Sex Before Sex Ed is organized into four chapters. The first two chapters work primarily by juxtaposition, and thus by an accumulation of texts which index various sexual-logistical phenomena. The latter two chapters take up fewer texts at greater length, lingering in the affective interstices of drama. Rather than leveraging a concept to produce new readings of literary texts, each of the chapters uses literary texts to develop my concept of the sex life. Where the first chapter is focused on how early moderns learned to fit their bodies together with other bodies, the second chapter segues from the enactment of sexual pedagogy to the material conditions of such fittings-together, including the use of lubrication. Shifting gears from the logistical to the affective, the third chapter analyzes the emotions that motivate characters' actions, and the affective literacies which either bring them happily together or fail to do so. The fourth chapter moves from affective literacy to the pernicious effects of affect by focusing on the ways that race fundamentally shaped which bodies got to fit with which other bodies and how. While all of the historical actors and fictional characters I discuss throughout this dissertation are racialized—in the sense that they are, to use Geraldine Heng's definition of race, "demarcate[d] . . . through differences . . . that are selectively essentialized as absolute and fundamental, in order to distribute positions and powers differentially to human groups"—this final chapter makes race the primary category of analysis in order to build on and complicate the conceptual parameters

that the previous three chapters establish.[57] The "sex life," I argue, needs to be understood intersectionally if it is to account for the lived experience of early moderns.

While I produce new readings of literary texts along the way, my primary goal has been to demonstrate that thinking with the propositions embedded in the "sex life" can illuminate wide swaths of historical sexual knowledge and practice that would otherwise, on the one hand, fly beneath the analytic radar of critics focused on the discursive ebbs and flows of sexual ideas, meanings, and categories and, on the other, above the analytic radar of critics focused on identifying particular sex acts. I use the metaphor of a critical "radar" intentionally: even as my own meso-level analytic practice is able to see things about sex and sexuality that other critics have not seen before, it has its own limitations—objects, knowledges, and practices that fly above or beneath my own radar (including, as I discuss in the epilogue, some of the structural characteristics of gender, race, and sexuality that do not appear as clearly at the meso-level). My goal is not to castigate others or to advocate for *only* attending to the meso-level. Instead, I have tried to direct my attention to what seems to me to be an important, fecund, and largely overlooked form of analysis in the hopes that other scholars, early modernists or otherwise, might be encouraged to adopt a similar analytic practice and refine it for their own questions and purposes.

Sex Before Sex Ed spans a broad historical period. The earliest text I read, Francesco Berni's poem "Capitolo delle Pesche," appeared in 1522. The most recent text I read, a piece of John Cannon's memoir, was written sometime between 1696 and his death in the 1740s. While the 1520s, 1580-90s, 1620s, and 1680-90s are given special attention, the myriad texts that appear in this dissertation were written, composed, published, and read widely across the one

[57] Heng, 27.

hundred and seventy-five year period that marks the boundaries of my analysis.[58] And while my primary focus has been on England and texts published in English, I have sampled somewhat freely, as far as my own linguistic skills have allowed, from other languages and national traditions—primarily French and Italian. My goal in sweeping broadly across time and space has been twofold. On the one hand, many of the texts that I analyze have direct lines of influence on later texts. Thomas Nashe, for instance, was directly influenced by Pietro Aretino—as were many English writers—and so I read Nashe's "Choise of Valentines" (1592) alongside Aretino's *Sonetti Lussuriosi* (1524). On the other hand, by identifying strikingly similar representations of sexual practice in, for instance, the anonymous English closet drama *Sodom* (1672-76) and Berni's Italian poem "Capitolo delle Pesche" (1522), I argue that this sexual practice—the use of lubricant in anal sex—was actually performed by early moderns, since, given the significant differences between these texts, the practice they represent cannot be explained away as merely a product of generic conventions, even though both texts are fictions. Where my first justification is based on elucidating causality, my second is based on furthering specific conceptual and historical arguments.

Indeed, juxtaposing quite different texts in order to extract knowledge of historical practice from their surprisingly similar representations of the actions and feelings of sexual bodies is what allows me to make historical claims using primarily fictional evidence. A poem is not a representation of actual sexual practice, of course. But if multiple poets—working in different languages, different countries, and different genres, and writing decades or even centuries apart—represent women guiding men's penises into their vaginas (as I discuss in

[58] In fact, some texts, like the anonymous *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, which I discuss in chapter one, continued to be republished and read by non-specialist audiences well into the nineteenth century. My analysis, however, does not extend that far.

chapter one), then it seems more reasonable to argue that these poets knew about this sexual practice than to argue that each of them just happened to imagine it. Where I often turn to poems for descriptions of sexual practice, I am more likely to turn to plays to understand the affects that limn those practices. Because plays are collaborative and enacted—because they are able to collectively stage bodies actively *fantasizing* rather than merely encoding a particular sexual fantasy—it is no accident that my focus on forms of affective conjecture and imagining other people's emotions and desires emerges in my discussions of early modern playscripts (and, in one case, imagined early modern performance).

Chapter One: "Practicing Sex"

In my first chapter, "Practicing Sex: A Primer on Sexual-Logistical Knowledge," I focus on what one character calls sexual "accidents," since the spectacle of these supposed failures makes visible the practice that lies behind "sexual practice." I excavate these "accidents" from a generically diverse archive of early modern texts and images, such as Pietro Aretino's *Sonetti Lussuriosi* (1527), Thomas Nashe's "A Choise of Valentines" (1592), the autobiographical account of John Cannon (1740s), Thomas Carew's "A Rapture" (1640), and the anonymous medical treatise, *Aristotle's Masterpiece* (1690). In particular, I attend to how these texts represent the practice of penis-in-vagina sex—and especially women guiding men's penises into their vaginas, a practice I call "penis-guiding"—in order to extract from the texts traces of the knowledge of how to perform this particular sex act.

I call the knowledge of how to have sex that is represented in these texts "sexual-logistical knowledge" in order to differentiate it from the reproductive knowledge many scholars

refer to when they use the term "sexual knowledge."[59] Where knowledge of reproduction entails knowing a set of abstract propositions (e.g., in the terms of early modern science, conception happens when the seeds of men and women intermingle), sexual-logistical knowledge entails knowing how to perform a more concrete set of practices. Existing scholarship has often taken reproductive management to be synonymous with sexual knowledge *tout court*. For instance, Rudolph Bell's provocatively titled study of sixteenth-century Italian advice literature, *How to Do It*, is less focused on knowledge of *how* to have sex than knowledge *of* reproduction, since it is primarily concerned, in its one chapter on sexual practice, with theories of conception. Even his section on "Positions during Intercourse" has almost nothing to say about bodily positions *per se*, save for a brief (but welcome) discussion of Savonarola's instructions on foreplay in *Ad mulieres ferrarienses*.[60]

Similarly, Tim Hitchcock, in arguing that historians of sexuality should view sex as part of a "physical culture," makes reproduction the central historiographical concern of such a culture.[61] When he says, for instance, that "in the late seventeenth century most sexual knowledge, and the physical culture it informed, was transmitted through word of mouth," he means that *reproductive* knowledge circulated orally, since "most working people wanted . . . to avoid pregnancy."[62] This latter claim obscures a vast array of sexual practices and knowledges that did not take, in the first instance, avoiding or inducing reproduction as the central question. I have thus largely bracketed reproductive concerns, not as a definitive statement about the content or use of quotidian sexual knowledge, but as a strategic analytic maneuver intended to highlight

[59] See, for instance: Gowing, *Common Bodies* and "Knowledge and Experience"; and Porter and Hall.
[60] Bell, 34-35.
[61] Hitchcock, "Reformulation," 826.
[62] Hitchcock, "Reformulation," 827-28.

forms of sexual knowledge that are currently not recognized as such. One of my central premises is that provisionally analytically separating knowledge of how to perform sex acts from knowledge of reproduction allows for a fuller understanding of women's and men's quotidian experience of sex and sexuality. My focus on sexual-logistical knowledge, then, aspires to a feminism that can simultaneously resist the misogyny of disregarding the burden of reproductive management placed onto women *and* the misogyny of reducing women's sexuality solely to reproduction.

Chapter Two: "Love's Obliging Arts"

Following on my explication of the sexual-logistical knowledge relations entailed in representations of penis-guiding in the first chapter, the second chapter, "'Love's Obliging Arts: Lubrication and the Material Conditions of Sexual Practice," demonstrates that early moderns frequently thought of sex in terms of its logistical ease or difficulty. Taking up the anonymous closet drama *Sodom* (1670s) and Francesco Berni's "Capitolo delle Pesche" (1522) in addition to Nicolas Chorier's pornographic prose dialogue, *Satyra Sotadica* (1660), I show that some early modern representations of sexual intercourse focused on the relative lubrication, and thus relative ease of entry, of both vaginal and anal orifices. Not only were early moderns thinking about sexual lubrication, they were also using lubricants—sometimes repurposing slick household products such as pomatum (a type of lip balm) and sometimes distilling various "essences" that could be used as lubricants. What's more, I show that other household objects like tables and stools could serve as sexual tools which aided in the logistical maneuvering required for various sex acts. Attending closely to our own editorial tradition, I also turn to editorial practices like glossing and the assignment of authorship in order to demonstrate how

these practices—in order words, these scholarly "lubricants"—can create the conditions of possibility for recognizing—or, as often as not, ignoring—the sexual practices and materials that are represented in early modern texts.[63]

I then move backward in time from late seventeenth-century texts including *Sodom* to early seventeenth-century city comedies like John Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605) and Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker's *The Roaring Girl* (1611), which gesture toward a sexual economy embedded in local medical economies, and then on further still to Richard Eden's English translation of Pietro Martire d'Anghiera's *Decades of the New World* (1555), a sixteenth-century ethnographic account of the logistical difficulties Spanish colonizers had when trying to have sex with insufficiently lubricated Caribbean women. I show that investigating the material conditions of sexual practice can open onto the ways in which sex was embedded in various arenas of daily life—including the ongoing production of race. For instance, reading early modern city comedies alongside more pornographic texts like *Sodom* can reveal how apothecaries and their wives provided early moderns with both sexual-logistical knowledge and sexual tools, like lubricant. In all, these first two chapters survey—across generic, national, linguistic, and temporal boundaries—a persistent early modern tendency to represent sex as a *practice*, as something one does within particular material conditions, as well as something one has to learn to do. This sexual "know-how," I argue, threaded itself through the daily lives of early moderns, and thus constitutes a key part of the history of sexuality.

Chapter Three: "Pedagogical Love"

[63] My focus on these editorial practices is one form of what Masten has called "queer philology."

Where my first two chapters take up the physicality of sex, and hence the logistics that sex entails, my third chapter, "Pedagogical Love: Affect Theories and Female-Female Erotics on the Elizabethan Stage," moves toward the more affective, ineffable forms of bodily knowledge that subtend sexual relationships—the "feel-how" that complements a more logistical sexual "know-how." Sex and the messy emotional relationships it sometimes entails are some of the fundamental organizing forces of early modern drama. But even as these emotions (including anger, jealousy, disappointment, pleasure, excitement) frequently spur dialogue and drive plot, they are often left implicit in the interstices of dramatic conflict. Characters on the early modern stage, though, frequently espouse sophisticated theories of how sexual emotions are generated; how they can be corralled, contained, and redirected; and how they can be solicited from others. This is particularly true of dramatic representations of female-female relationships which—as Valerie Traub, Denise Walen, and others have shown—occur frequently on the Renaissance stage, but almost always in some degree of sublimation, governed as they were by logics of unintelligibility, invisibility, and impossibility.[64] Nevertheless, women loved women in early modern England—as did their fictional counterparts on the stage. This chapter analyzes the affective practices and tactics with which female characters produce and cultivate such love.

The history of emotions has become in recent years a robust field of inquiry in early modern studies.[65] The majority of this work has taken up and revised earlier work on

[64] See Traub, *Renaissance of Lesbianism* and Walen.

[65] See, for instance, Douglas Trevor's *The Poetics of Melancholy in Early Modern England* (2009); Gail Kern Paster's *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (2004) and her collection, jointly edited with Katherine Rowe and Mary Floyd-Wilson, entitled *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (2004); Steven Mullaney's *The Reformation of Emotions in the Age of Shakespeare* (2015); Erin Sullivan's *Beyond Melancholy: Sadness and Selfhood in Renaissance England* (2016), and Bradley J. Irish's *Emotion in the Tudor Court: Literature, History, and Early Modern Feeling* (2018). For an account of emotion in the medieval period that has been influential for historians of emotion focused on early modernity, see Barbara H. Rosenwein's *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (2006).

humoralism, a medical rubric which has proved to be a vibrant entry point into the historicization of Renaissance bodies and the many ways in which they felt. In this chapter, I take a different tack. Just as my first chapters turn their attention away from sexual discourses in order to understand daily sexual practices, this chapter turns away from the discursive horizons of humoralism and toward the more specific affective practices represented in dramatic representations of intimate relationships. Clearly, humoralism—and medicine more generally—exerted an enormous epistemological force on early moderns, shaping how they knew their bodies and the bodies of others. But precisely because it functioned as an organizing schema for abstract theories of the body, it is difficult to tell when and how humoral discourses would have manifested in any particular early modern's daily life. To take a modern analogue: I might well know that low blood sugar increases my irritability; this does not mean I will always attribute my frustrations to their physiological origins, nor does it mean that I will think to eat an apple every time I am frustrated. Understanding early moderns' abstract knowledges of the physiological underpinnings of emotion is an important part of the historical picture. But it is only a part.

To offer another part, I turn in this chapter to the work of the psychologist Silvan Tomkins. In his multi-volume *Affect Imagery Consciousness*, Tomkins lays out the concept of "affect theories," ideas about how affects work that serve as organizing rubrics for daily life. As Eve Sedgwick explains it: "by Tomkins's account . . . all people's cognitive/affective lives are organized according to alternative, changing, strategic, and hypothetical affect theories."[66] My goal in turning away from humoralism and toward affect theories is not to replace one set of theoretical knowledges with another. Affect theories, instead, are ways of describing the

[66] Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 133. See also Sedgwick and Frank, eds., *Shame and Its Sisters*, a selection of Tomkins's writings.

emotional work that early moderns performed on a daily basis—the "alternative, changing, strategic, and hypothetical" *practices* by which they "organized" their "cognitive/affective lives." In this way, my inquiry is aligned with Erin Sullivan's recent work on the history of emotions. In *Beyond Melancholy*, Sullivan also "push[es] the historiography of early modern emotion beyond its current preoccupation with medical humoral theory,"[67] and instead takes up "emotional 'experience'" as those "processes of self-inquiry, reflection, management, and performance that might be involved in encounters with emotion."[68] The embodiment and enactment of these processes is the bread and butter of Renaissance drama.

This chapter analyzes these processes as they appear in two late sixteenth-century stageplays, John Lyly's *Galatea* (1588/1592) and William Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (1599), each of which is centrally concerned with female-female sexual relationships. Paying close attention both to what is said and to what is left unsaid in these plays, I argue that sexual affects—such as the fear, pleasure, disappointment, anger, and anticipation that produce and are produced by "sex"—are *learned*, and that the affective pedagogies that produce them are some of the fundamental building blocks of a sex life. For instance, in the case of *As You Like It*, Rosalind's inability to recognize and reciprocate Celia's affective appeals is, I argue, an emblem for the emotional pushes and pulls—the affective literacies—that weave themselves through the sex lives of the early moderns. In *Galatea*, by contrast, these affective literacies shine vibrantly through the subjunctive moods and conjectural maneuvers of almost all of that play's characters.

Just as the first two chapters were attentive to the ways in which scholarly practices such as glossing shape what we are able to know about historical sexual knowledge, this chapter also

[67] Sullivan, 4.
[68] Sullivan, 6.

lingers over the scholarly practices that have foreclosed investigation of early modern sexual affect theories. Specifically, I argue that the scholarly recourse to the term "homoeroticism" has implicitly recognized, and then obscured, the affective negotiations and literacies that are part and parcel of sexual relationships. While "homoeroticism" has proven to be an important scholarly tool for rendering same-sex intimacies legible in historical periods before homosexuality, it has also inadvertently flattened important differences among the various relationships it concatenates under its wide umbrella. Even as it uncouples sexual desire from gender expression, "homoeroticism" tends to privilege the gender identities of the people or characters under analysis. The result, I argue, is that scholars have subordinated the erotic in favor of the homo, and thus have not yet accounted for the quotidian emotional practices, including being able to imagine the desires of another, entailed in erotic relationships.

Chapter Four: "Traffic and Comfort"

Even when the "erotic" is uncoupled from the analytic force of the "homo," its own under-definition has also tended to flatten other forms of social difference that structure sexual relationships, including and especially race. This final chapter, "Traffic and Comfort: the Affects of Interracial Romance," thus leverages the tools developed in the chapters that precede it in order to highlight and explicate some of those differences. Shifting my primary focus away from gender, I turn toward early modern racism and constructions of racial difference. I do this by extending my analyses of sexual-affective pedagogies into interracial sexual interactions, both historical and literary. How, I ask, might our understanding of early modern race and sexuality change if we understood the affective relations involved in the production and maintenance of racial difference in sexual relationships?

I examine these affective relations primarily by means of an extended reading of John Fletcher's stage play *The Island Princess* (1621), wherein a Christian Portuguese venturer, Armusia, falls in love with a Muslim Malukan princess, Quisara. While he woos her, Armusia describes Quisara as a noble white beauty. When she asks him to convert to Islam to marry her, however, Armusia becomes enraged—and Quisara suddenly becomes, in his eyes, as ugly as death. Where the previous chapter dealt with certain negative emotions—fear and disappointment—in the context of female-female relationships on the early modern stage, this chapter takes up the very different textures, tropes, and social effects of another negative affect: anger. I argue that Armusia's sexual anger—which, because it spreads to the play's other venturers, comes to stand in for a more generic Portuguese male anger—is the primary racializing force in the play. And because this anger differentiates and hierarchizes types of people, it is best understood as a form of rac*ism*. Fletcher's play shows, I argue, that, both in the play and in early modern England, racism historically and conceptually precedes and produces race.[69] As is the case with Fletcher's play, this race-producing racism frequently emerges in early modern texts as an expression of sexual affect. Indeed, the quotidian intimate relations of early moderns produced not merely sex lives, but sex lives that structured, even as they were structured by, intersecting modes of being in the world with others, including and especially gender and race.

In addition to contextualizing Fletcher's play within a *discursive* racism that is also live in contemporaneous ethnographic writing, I place Fletcher's play into its *material* context by focusing on the racial diversity audiences that may have seen it performed in London. Relying

[69] Fields and Fields make a somewhat similar argument, though they are working with sociological data from the contemporary United States, and, more importantly, their structural analysis would reject the meso-level, affect-based argument I make in this chapter.

primarily on parish records of births, deaths, and marriages, Imtiaz Habib has recently shown that there were many interracial couples living in London in the seventeenth century.[70] Charting the map that these records reveal, I show that there were several interracial couples living near the Blackfriars theatre, one of the most important playhouses in early modern England. These couples, I argue, might well have attended a performance of *The Island Princess* at the Blackfriars. By unsettling scholarly assumptions about the whiteness of early modern audiences, I am able to ask new questions about the relationships between gender, sex, race, and affect on the early modern stage. How might our understanding of early modern dramatic representations of interracial relationships change if we reckoned with the possibility that some of the spectators in the playhouse were themselves in interracial relationships? While Fletcher's play may have encouraged English fantasies about the faraway "Spice Islands" of the Pacific, it also encouraged playgoers to think about their own relationship to the racial others—both white and of color—living, and loving, in their very neighborhood.

Sex Lives of the Early Moderns

"In their very neighborhood": it is the impulse to be epistemological and affective neighbors with the early moderns—to move toward the particular, the local, the quotidian, the proximate, and the *practical*—that drives this dissertation. Institutions like the church and the state undeniably molded the life paths and possibilities of early modern English women and men. But for most of them, their daily lives—much like our own—were driven less by doctrinal disputes or legal quandaries than they were by mundane chores and feelings, by spats and infatuations, by fumbling about and making do. By, say, plucking up the courage to follow the

[70] See Habib, *Black Lives in the English Archives*.

broomstick hanging above your neighbor's house to the party that awaited inside; to maybe grab a drink and a bite of cheese; and then, butterflies in your stomach, to follow your crush up the stairs and into the attic where they might awkwardly grab your hand, look you deep in the eyes, and accidentally bang their head against your nose as their lips graze your cheek, missing your mouth by a mile. Downstairs your friend Margaret walks in with her new beau, James—a black man who recently converted to Christianity in front of your entire parish.[71] As your crush laughs, says "Sorry, it's my first time," and asks if your nose is okay, you hear someone exclaim to Margaret, "How could you show up here with him . . . he's . . . he's so *dark*." "I like him *because* he's dark," Margaret retorts angrily. As Margaret snatches up his hand, James holds his tongue—to appease her as much as to appease the other white partygoers, some of whom are uncomfortable with his presence, and some of whom are uncomfortable with the discomfort of their friends.

This scene is imagined, of course, but it is, as the following pages will attest, one of the possible scenes that might be stitched together from a broad archive of early modern texts and images when they are read in search of what they have to say about quotidian sexual practice. The logistics of the kiss sit alongside the anxieties—and desires—that lead to it. James's blackness emerges just as much from the stranger's disgust as it does from Margaret's desire, and from her angry reply. And though they happen far from any organized classroom, each of these interactions is pedagogical: from the dull pain of your nose and the ghost of a kiss on your cheek, you learn how to better make your lips meet other lips the next time you find yourself kissing. From your neighbor's incredulity you learn that certain people holding hands with certain people may make some angry and disgusted, even as it piques the desires of other. And,

[71] For a lengthier discussion of the case of Margaret Person and James Curres, see chapter four.

even more importantly, you learn to start replacing “certain people” with other words—words like “moor” and “black” and “fair” that do the work of differentiating kinds of people. When you leave the party you take these lessons with you. You remember some parts of them, forget others. You learn these lessons again—and new lessons, too—from the next party, or from the ladies who gossip before church, or from the men who yell and whistle from their carts as they ride past. Consciously or not, these lessons build up over time. They become part of you, part of your life. And then, maybe, if you happen to be a writer or an artist, they emerge—consciously or not—in the scenes you pen, the characters you craft, the allegorical representations of proverbs you painstakingly paint into a panel as wide as you are tall. This is, after all, what you *know* about sex. It’s your life! And on the page, on the canvas, and in the bedroom, you live it as well as you can.

Part One: Sexual Logistics

Chapter One

Practicing Sex: A Primer on Sexual-Logistical Knowledge

"For we do not Fuck brutally like
Beasts . . . but with knowledg [*sic*]"
—Frank, *The School of Venus*[72]

"More he sayeth not"

Early in the seventeenth century, in a coastal town called Minehead, west of London and just across the Bristol Channel from Wales, a male laborer named Meredith Davy shared a bed with a twelve-year-old boy named John Vicary. According to another servant who slept across the room, Davy would sometimes drink after work, and when he would go to bed drunk he would, from time to time, have sex with Vicary. We do not know exactly what it meant that he "had sex" with Vicary—what did they do with their bodies? who did what to whom?—but we do know that, eventually, the other servant realized that they were doing *something* and turned Davy into the authorities for sodomy. The case appeared before the Somerset Court of Quarter Sessions in 1630, where the servant testified that "the creaking of their bed and the groans and cries of the boy were quite audible."[73] But when he was brought before the magistrate and accused with sodomy, Davy "denieth that he ever used any unclean action with the said boy as they lay in bed; and more he sayeth not."[74]

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[72] Mudge, 38. All citations of *The School of Venus* and *A Dialogue Between a Married Lady and a Maid* refer to the versions printed in *When Flesh Becomes Word: An Anthology of Early Eighteenth-Century Libertine Literature*, edited by Bradford K. Mudge.
[73] Bray, 69.
[74] ibid., 69.

This trial is the evidentiary lynchpin of Alan Bray's *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*. Bray is interested in Davy's case because he finds it odd that Davy would be so reckless as to have sex with the boy while other people were in the room. Sodomy was, after all, a capital offense; if convicted, Davy would have been executed. So his behavior is, according to Bray, "so much at odds with what one would expect that it is difficult to believe Davy was seeing himself in the same light that we see him in, or that the thought that the intense hatred with which sodomites were spoken of was likely to be turned on him."[75] Because Davy did not try to hide the sex he was having with Vicary—because he was so brazen about it—and because sodomy was so legally dangerous, Bray argues that Davy did not think that what he was doing *was* sodomy. In Bray's words, the sodomite "was the companion of witches and Papists, of werewolves and agents of the King of Spain," and was therefore so fantastic, "so distant from everyday life," that it did not even occur to Davy that someone might think that what he was doing with Vicary might make *him* a sodomite.[76] Davy denies being a sodomite, that is, because in early modern England sodomites were always other people.

From his reading of Davy's case, Bray makes one of the most influential arguments in the history of sexuality: "there was little or no reason for homosexual relations," he claims, "to influence people's lives outside of the strictly sexual sphere."[77] If someone found themselves performing acts that might be considered sodomitical, he says, they simply made "mental adjustments"[78] such as "depreciating the experience as 'not important'; redefining it in terms of 'physical release' or friendship; or being unwilling to talk about the experience or to allow it to

[75] Bray, 69.
[76] ibid., 68.
[77] ibid., 69.
[78] ibid., 67.

influence behavior."[79] Sodomy was something you did, not someone you were; a set of acts, not an identity; a "temporary aberration," to use Foucault's word, in an otherwise perfectly normal life, not a type of person.[80] Davy denies any "unclean action" and "more he sayeth not." "What more was there to say?" Bray asks.[81]

Davy may not have thought of himself as a sodomite, but what *did* he think while he was having sex with Vicary? Though we do not know what, exactly, Davy and Vicary did in that bed, whatever they were doing required a certain amount of knowledge. Whatever acts they committed, at least one of the parties had to know *how* to perform these acts. As I argued in the introduction, uncovering this kind of knowledge—not only in this particular episode, but in early modern sexual practice more broadly—is essential to understanding the quotidian sexual experiences of early moderns. Where Bray sketched a shift in the *meanings* of sex over the course of the seventeenth century, I want to sketch the contours of the knowledge of *how* to have sex. The guiding questions of this chapter, thus, are: what do you have to know to actually have sex, whatever "sex" may entail? And where, and how, do you acquire this knowledge?

Davy was not the only sexual actor in that bed. If Vicary was deposed, Bray does not report this. All that remains in the archive are his "groans and cries," audible, if mediated, through the voice of the reporting servant. Such residual sexual evidence reveals little about whether these "groans and cries" are indexes of pleasure, pain, or some mix of the two. It is unclear whether Vicary consented, or whether he even knew that he could consent. It is also unclear what logistical role he played in whatever acts were committed in that bed. These archival silences establish a queer feminist impasse: it is both difficult and necessary to

[79] ibid., 131n30.
[80] Foucault, *History of Sexuality* Vol. 1, 43.
[81] Bray, 69.

acknowledge and account for, on the one hand, the clear hierarchy of power between Davy and Vicary and, on the other, the possibility that this pederastic relationship might be physically and socially pleasurable for both parties.[82] This impasse—the seeming incommensurability of, to use the title of a classic feminist volume, pleasure and danger—undergirds my premises and analyses as I approach historical sex acts.[83] Davy and Vicary serve as a salutary reminder that sexual logistics are not devoid of power relations; that some forms of sexual violence are supported by particular forms of sexual-logistical knowledge; and that attention to sex acts—even potentially violent acts—as logistical and epistemological practices does not entail sidestepping the difficult question of power. In fact, it entails stepping directly into it.[84]

In order to offer an account of the sexual knowledges that were at play in Davy and Vicary's shared bed, I turn now to a sex act whose logistics produced a wide and vibrant archive of literary representations in early modernity: penis-in-vagina sex. While this act is, presumably, not what was happening in Davy and Vicary's bed, focusing on the logistical predicaments produced by this seemingly "natural" sex act can allow scholars to understand in broader terms the epistemological difficulties posed by bringing one's body together with another's body for pleasure. Tracing depictions of penis-in-vagina sex across early modern poems, prose pornography, and visual art from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, France, and Italy, I will show that the performance of even the supposed *sine qua non* of sex acts requires a whole set of knowledges, none of which are simply "naturally" endowed upon any given sexual actor. What's more, the difficult and pressing issues of consent and power that are implicit in Davy and Vicary's case are also present in the male-female sexual relations I will discuss—both in their

[82] For more on classical pederasty, see Halperin.
[83] See Vance, ed., *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*.
[84] On stepping into this methodological and political impasse, see Traub, *Thinking Sex*, passim.

literary representations and, as I will show at the end of the chapter, in the very real sexual acts that these representations scripted. "What more was there to say?" Bray asks, throwing up his hands to the rhetorical winds. There was, I think, *everything* left to say.

A Thousand Little Accidents

Though Thomas Nashe's bawdy narrative poem, "The Choise of Valentines" (1592), is best known for its depiction of early modern English dildos, the poem also presents a surprisingly detailed account of a variety of sex acts.[85] Early in the poem, Tomalin, Nashe's male protagonist, recounts how he is aroused by his sweetheart Francis's series of mating calls: fainting, falling onto her bed, tossing her head back and forth, shutting her eyes, and wagging her tongue all around (ll. 95-97). Unable to resist these apparently enticing convulsions, Tomalin approaches Francis and slowly raises her dress: "Softlie my fingers, up theis curtaine, heave / And make me happie stealing by degreese" (ll. 100-1). "Stealing" happiness all along the way, his "fingers" then travel upward from her legs, to her knees, and then to her "mannely thigh" (ll. 102-3) before moving on to the "joyes" compared to which, he says, "heaven, and paradize are all but toyes" (ll. 105-7).[86] The "sight" (l. 107) that brings Tomalin these incomparable "joyes" is Francis's vulva, which he describes as round and wet, "bare out lyke the bending of an hill, / At whose decline a fountaine dwelleth still," and covered in pubic hair, "uglie bryers / Resembling much a duskie nett of wyres" (ll. 111-14). All this roaming through the titillating flora of

[85] Ian Moulton notes that "Nashe's poem gives by far the most detailed description of a dildo in Renaissance literature" ("Transmuted" 79). See also Valerie Traub's discussion of the poem in her chapter on "female orgasm [and] prosthetic pleasures" in *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* (96-99). Although the six extant manuscripts of this poem date from the early seventeenth century, I follow Moulton in dating the composition of the poem itself to 1592 ("Transmuted" 59). All citations of Nashe's poem refer to F.P. Wilson's 1966 reissue of Ronald B. McKerrow's 1904-5 edition of Nashe's complete works.

[86] For more on the eroticization of the thighs in early modernity, see Fisher, "Wantoning."

Francis's body is itself so intense that "it makes the fruites of love eftsoone be rype; / And pleasure pluckt too tymelie from the stemme / To dye ere it hath seene Jerusalem" (ll. 118-120). Tomalin, that is, "pluck[s]" his fruit too early, ejaculating before he can reach the "Jerusalem" of vaginal penetration.

This premature ejaculation and the loss of erection it entails—he is rendered "all unarm'd" and "unwealdie for the fight" (ll. 123, 125)—generates the central tension of the poem's narrative: Francis is aroused, but Tomalin cannot manage to become erect again. He does try his best, though. "I kisse, I clap, I feele, I view at will," he says, "Yett dead he [i.e. his penis] lyes not thinking good or ill" (ll. 129-30). Francis, distraught at the sight of this dead member, joins in the effort: "Unhappie me, quoth shee, and wilt' not stand? / Com, lett me rubb and chafe it with my hand" (ll. 131-32). When this rubbing and chafing do not work, she improvises new techniques of arousal. "No means shall want in me," she says,

> That maie availe to his recoverie.
> Which saide, she tooke and rould it on hir thigh,
> And when she lookt' on't, she would weepe and sighe,
> And dandled it, and dance't it up and doune,
> Not ceasing, till she had rais'd it from his swoune. (ll. 137-42)

Just as the failure of Tomalin's "kiss" leads him to also "clap" and "view at will," the initial failure of Francis's rubbing and chafing produces a chain of sexual actions—rolling and sighing, dandling and dancing—that, since Nashe represents each with a different verb, apparently differ from each other even as each purports to attempt to reach the same goal. This copia of sexual actions is the formal hallmark of Nashe's poem. Over the course of a mere sixty lines, Francis and Tomalin spring, cull, clip, faint, fall, toss, shut their eyes, waggle, come, heave, steal, bare, creep, ascend, linger, climb, see, behold, shine, restrain (or, in one manuscript, distrain), check, steep, pluck, die, fade, spread, spend, kiss, clap, feel, view, rub (twice!), chafe, roll, weep, sigh,

dandle, dance, fly, thack, foin, prick, pierce, dig, strike, dive, play, thrust, give, take, and meet. In this proliferation of verbs, Nashe offers his readers a highly textured representation of male-female sexual relations—including, but also exceeding, vaginal penetration with a penis.

While this verbal copia can serve as its own form of linguistic eroticism, it does so in part by encouraging readers to imagine this series of sexual actions.[87] Unspooling this skein of verbs, Nashe asks his readers to imagine that Francis and Tomalin perform the various acts that each new verb indexes. And in asking readers to imagine Francis and Tomalin performing these acts, the poem also implicitly asks them to imagine that Francis and Tomalin know *how* to perform these acts. Each verb, in effect, marks what Valerie Traub has called a sexual "knowledge relation," one that entails previous sexual experience even as it is grounded in the present performance of particular acts.[88]

Taking seriously the narrative and epistemological functions of this long list of sexual actions, I draw several conclusions from Nashe's representation of this male-female sexual tryst:

1. The sex that Tomalin and Francis have is virtuosic in its range of actions; this virtuosity is severely flattened by the rubric of "penis-in-vagina" sex into which it might generally be categorized. The poem, both in its focus on Tomalin's premature ejaculation and in Francis's subsequent turn to her dildo, may be largely concerned with vaginal penetration, but the copia of verbs suggests that both Francis and Tomalin perform and enjoy—and thus know how to perform and enjoy—a much more varied set of sex acts.
2. The physical logistics of these actions index a complex set of epistemological and cognitive processes. These processes are both explicit and implicit and allow Francis and

[87] In her essay on "the functions of early modern strap-ons," Liza Blake notes the erotic potential of Nashe's linguistic copia when she claims that the poem "multipl[ies] pleasures by multiplying rhetorics" (144).
[88] See Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 2 and passim.

Tomalin to think about how they might move their bodies and fit them together—or pull them apart—in a variety of ways.[89]

3. Epistemological and cognitive processes both require and produce a set of context-dependent knowledges about the physical logistics of sex. The "means" that Francis deems "shall not want" in her are, in short, sexual-logistical knowledges.
4. These knowledges are context dependent. If you "strike" once you begin to know something about "striking," but this knowledge might not necessarily translate into another context in which you might strike. Francis's instinct to rub and chafe, for instance, presumably comes from some prior sexual knowledge. Nevertheless, in this particular sexual scenario, this knowledge does not bring about the desired effect.
5. Context dependency suggests that sexual-logistical knowledge might be best understood not as a collection of discrete epistemological contents, but as a set of ongoing pedagogical relations.
6. Sexual pedagogy is not reducible to a model of knowledgeable teacher and ignorant student, since either partner may, at any given moment, teach the other partner some new sexual-logistical knowledge.
7. And, finally, sexual knowledge relations are also bound up, as are all knowledge relations, in relations of ignorance. The improvisatory nature of Francis's and Tomalin's sex means that some sexual actions are the extemporaneous products of failing, or not

[89] Though their primary concern is the "anachronism" of cognition's "polytemporality," Evelyn Tribble's and John Sutton's contention that "the past animates the present both by way of explicit access to particular significant episodes, and simultaneously in tacit routines, embodied habits and skills with no reference to the repeated 'timeless practices' by which they have been incorporated" (589-590) bolsters my sense that Francis's and Tomalin's actions are driven by cognitive and epistemological processes which are sometimes, but need not always be, explicitly invoked in the performance of a sex act. The body carries with it skilled knowledges whose origins are not always clear and whose presence is not always announced.

knowing how, to perform some other action. You might dandle, for instance, when you mean to—or because you do not quite know how to—dance.

While these sexual-logistical pedagogies are thematized in "The Choise of Valentines" both implicitly (in the improvisatory proliferation of sex acts indexed by Nashe's verbal copia) and explicitly (in, for instance, Tomalin's claim that he performs as Francis "prescrib'd" [l. 187]), they are not unique to Nashe. Similar sexual-logistical pedagogies are also thematized by one of Nashe's major influences, the Italian satirist Pietro Aretino.[90]

In one sonnet of Aretino's *Sonetti Lussuriosi* (1527)—his companion poems to Marcantonio Raimondi's *I modi* (1524), a series of engravings of various sexual positions based on designs by Giulio Romano—a woman comments on the inadequacies of the position her lover has taken:

Tu m'hai 'l cazzo in la potta, e 'l cul mi vedi,
Et io veggio il tuo cul, com'egli è fatto,
Ma tu potresti dir, ch'io son un matto,
Perche io tengo le mani, u' stanno i piedi;

Ma s'a cotesto modo fotter credi
Sei una bestia, e non ti verra fatto,
Perche assai meglio nel fotter m'addatto,
Quando co'l petto su 'l mio petti siedi

Io vi vo fotter per lettra comare….

She: "You have your prick in my pussy, and you see my ass, and I look at your rear and how it is formed."

He: "But you could say that I am crazy because I have my hands where my feet belong."

[90] In *Before Pornography* Moulton thoroughly surveys both Aretino's influence on Nashe's work and Nashe's reception by his peers. Nashe was, he notes, sometimes referred to by his contemporaries—both as a form of praise and as a condemnation—as the "English Aretine" (159).

She: "Well if you think that you are going to screw in this position you are a beast, and it won't happen because I conform to the act much better when you lie with your chest on my breast."

He: "I want to screw you by the book, ma'am…"[91]

Much as Nashe describes the specific logistics of Francis's and Tomalin's tryst—how, for instance, Francis "tooke and rould" Tomalin's penis "on hir thigh" (l. 138)—Aretino's woman narrates the specific logistical arrangement in which she and her lover find themselves. Though he has, unlike Tomalin, managed to get his "prick" (*cazzo*) into his lover's "pussy" (*potta*), Aretino's man has nevertheless not performed to his lover's satisfaction, since he has found himself in a "crazy" (*matto*) position. These lines narrate a spectacular sexual fumbling that is, in the end, unsatisfactory to Aretino's woman, much like Tomalin's sexual performance was unsatisfactory to Francis. But unlike Nashe's poem, which ends with Francis spurning Tomalin in favor of her dildo which "bendeth not, nor fouldeth anie deale" (l. 241), Aretino's poem offers a pedagogical corrective to this sexual fumbling. When his companion complains that she cannot "conform to the act" in the way he has positioned himself, Aretino's man, good student that he is, responds with a pedagogical desire: "I want to screw you by the book" ("*Io vi vo fotter per lettra*," l. 9). Whereas Tomalin is unable to respond appropriately to Francis's complaints, however much he and she may try, Aretino's man not only acknowledges his lover's dissatisfaction, but knows to seek out some codified set of directions set down in a metaphorical "book," some knowledge of how to "conform to the act," with which he can improve their sex.

Despite their different outcomes, each of these trysts evince similar notions of sexual-

[91] Talvacchia, 211. All citations of Aretino's poetry refer to Bette Talvacchia's English translations, appended to her monograph, *Taking Positions*. Though the original Italian is in verse, Talvacchia's translations are prose, and they emphasize the dialogic nature of the original sonnets, each of which is written as a conversation between the two sexual partners represented in the corresponding engraving. Because I print this sonnet without its pictorial companion, I have appended "She" and "He" for the ease of the reader.

logistical knowledge. As in Nashe, here the rubric of "penis-in-vagina sex" elides the actual logistical relation the poem represents, since this phrase does not account for the sexual-logistical negotiations entailed in arranging one's body in order to perform the act. And, as in Nashe, this logistical arrangement requires a set of cognitive and epistemological processes that are context dependent but, here more explicitly than in Nashe, conceptually portable. Aretino's woman, for instance, is able to apply knowledge she has obtained in other sexual contexts to this particular sexual episode, since she knows she "conform[s] to the act much better" in a different position than the one the man attempts. But since she has brought this knowledge with her from another sexual encounter, a form of epistemological revision and reinscription is still required: for her knowledge to be effectively deployed, she has to teach the man what she knows. "Conform[ing] to the act" might indeed draw epistemologically on "the book," the prior logistical knowledge that makes sex possible, but the contents of "the book" shift depending on the sexual context.

Ian Moulton has read Nashe's poem as revealing a "broader social incoherence about sexual power and gender identity," and that is certainly case.[92] Nonetheless, the fact that both Aretino's and Nashe's poems index similar sexual knowledge and ignorance relations cannot be adequately accounted for by a recourse to the "broader social" sphere, since the significant social and political differences between early sixteenth-century Italy and late sixteenth-century England—one Catholic, the other Protestant—mean that the "broader social" spheres in which each text was produced did not necessarily share the same conception of "sexual power and gender identity."[93] Juxtaposing these two poems, then, suggests that readers of "The Choise of

[92] Moulton, "Transmuted" 62.

[93] Moulton notes that "given the sociopolitical differences between Elizabethan England and pre-Tridentine Venice, the model of Aretino ultimately proved unworkable for Nashe" since the "'Choice of Valentines' seems to have brought Nashe little financial success and even less prestige" (*Before Pornography* 165). What did prove workable for Nashe, though, regardless of his political or financial success, was the Aretinesque depiction of sexual

Valentines" must understand not only its "broader social" meanings, but also the more local phenomenological—and pedagogical—interactions that it stages at length. Indeed, in representing "the details of actual sexual practices" as a series of actions whose performance necessarily entails some sexual-logistical knowledge, "The Choise of Valentines" raises a fundamental question for the history of sexuality: not only *what* are Tomalin and Francis doing, but *what do they have to know to do it*? And where, and how, did they learn?

Nashe and Aretino are, after all, far from the only early modern writers to present sexual logistics as a specifically *pedagogical* concern. For instance, more than a half-century after Nashe composed and circulated his poem, Frank, a character in *The School of Venus* (1680)—the English translation of *L'escole des filles* (1655), and one of the most famous examples of early modern prose pornography—explicitly claims that sex is something to be learned. As I note in the introduction, Frank tells her virginal protégée, Katy, that she is "an ignorant innocent Fool" for not understanding the advances of men. "Pray Cousin, why do you say so," Katy responds, asking, "is there any thing to be learned, which I do not know?" Though she has never yet had sex, Katy assumes that she has already instinctually gleaned, in one way or another, whatever sexual knowledge there is to be had. Frank disagrees. "You are so ignorant," she says, "you are to learn everything."[94] Here, Frank explicitly weaves together the knowledge and ignorance relations that Nashe implicitly indexes in his series of verbs, claiming not only that Katy is "ignorant"—an ignorance that is simultaneously produced by and the sign of both sexual "innocen[ce]" and sexual foolishness—but that she is *especially* ignorant, that she is "so" ignorant that she need not merely learn about sex but that she need learn "everything" about it.

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logistics—a sexual-logistical aesthetic that, as I will show, reappears in English writing throughout the seventeenth century.

[94] Mudge, 7.

But rather than merely chastising her for her ignorance, Frank also offers Katy a specific pedagogical solution. She must, according to Frank, attend to "the Precepts of Love" if she is to avoid sexual-logistical mishaps, the "Thousand little accidents which attend young lovers."[95]

These "Precepts" are foregrounded in the English subtitle of *The School of Venus* (1680): "the Ladies Delight, Reduced into Rules of Practice," a rather loose translation of the original French "la Philosophie des dames." What should be, literally, "the Ladies' Philosophy" morphs, in the hands of this anonymous English translator, into a "Delight" that can be "Reduced" into "Rules of Practice," a codified set of sexual directions that might, the reader is led to believe, help one avoid those "Thousand little accidents." In this way, *The School of Venus* is much like the "book" of Aretino's poem, though it comes over a century too late to be of any use to Aretino's man.

This focus on the dissemination of codifiable, practical dicta is also foregrounded in the replacement of the original "Epistre Invitatoire aux Filles," or "Invitational Epistle to Girls," with a more personal dedicatory epistle, "To Madam S— W—," which doubles down on the title's pedagogical metaphor.[96] "None Madam," it begins, "can be a candidate with you for this dedication, 'tis your Lordship alone ha's passed all the forms, and classes in this School, what delights you give, and with what eagerness you perform your Fucking exercises is sufficiently known to the many [who] have enjoyed you."[97] The curriculum of the "School" of Venus is, apparently, not filled with courses on the composition of Petrarchan lyrics, but with more practical "Fucking exercises" whose "forms" are not sonnets or ballads, but sexual actions that

[95] ibid., 4, 30, respectively.
[96] The French "epistre" can be found in the 1667 edition of *L'escole des filles* held in the private case, known menacingly as the "enfer," of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, BnF Enfer-112, fols. 2r-3v.
[97] Mudge, 3.

may be performed with more or less "eagerness." The author goes on to specify that this praise for Madam S— W— is heard often from her lovers, who attest that, after all her study, having sex with her is much more fun than "barely thrusting a Prick into a Cunt." "The well managing of a Fuck," the epistle teaches, "makes the *Summum Bonum*."[98] These emendations to the subtitle and dedicatory epistle in the English translation shift the focus of sexual pedagogy away from a system of interlocking abstractions—a "Philosophie"—and toward a distilled or "reduced" series of scripts for embodied rehearsal, "Rules of Practice" and "Fucking exercises." At least according to the text's frame, what was theory in French becomes practice in English.[99]

James Grantham Turner has argued that the title of this English translation "suggests both the effect sought by libertine discourse and the methodology appropriate to study it." "The libertine text," he says, "must be understood as an ideological 'school' and a performative script."[100] His reading of "the educational fantasy in sexual writing," what he calls "the erotic-didactic nexus,"[101] offers a way to understand texts like *The School of Venus* as fully imbricated in libertinism as a school of thought that was on its way, historically, toward "enlightenment" via "sexualization."[102] For Turner, that is, sex is a tool for understanding the intellectual history of pedagogy. In this chapter, I invert these terms: rather than explicating the imbrication of sex into intellectual history or into some other broad field of discursive meanings, I focus on the pedagogical underpinnings of sex as a quotidian embodied practice—a "practice" both in the sense of "action" and in the sense of "rehearsal." The case of Madam S— W— indicates that

[98] ibid., 3.
[99] Of course, this was not necessarily, or even likely, the case for individual readers. Readers of *The School of Venus* in either language surely found both theoretical precepts and practical guidelines—not to mention titillation—in its pages.
[100] Turner, 10.
[101] ibid., 10.
[102] ibid., 123.

"the well managing of a Fuck" is the product of a series of "Fucking exercises," of pedagogical rehearsals of behavior. Sexual practice, this text teaches, takes practice.

And behind all that sexual practice lie the "Thousand little accidents which," Frank claims, "attend young lovers." These "accidents"— Tomalin's premature ejaculation, for instance—can serve for historians of sexuality as methodological entry points into the sexual-pedagogical relations that, while sometimes explicitly foregrounded (as in Aretino's sonnet or *The School of Venus*), are often left implicit in literary and visual representations (as in "The Choise of Valentines").[103] Attending simultaneously to the phenomenology, epistemology, and pedagogies implicit in these "accidents"—to what bodies do, what they have to know to do it, and how they acquire this knowledge—will enable scholars to develop more nuanced analyses of the quotidian sexual relations of historical actors. The production of sexual knowledge, I argue, is not merely a discursive phenomenon operating at the macro-level of various disciplinary institutions but also a key part of the individual, phenomenological experience of sexual practice.

The potential payoff of shifting the focus from what sex *meant* in the past to how sex was *practiced* should already begin to be clear. To take Nashe as merely one example: understanding the reciprocity of the sexual-logistical knowledge exchange involved in the variety of acts subsumed into the reductive category of "penis-in-vagina sex" can disrupt scholarly tendencies to analyze this poem primarily as a symptom of underlying cultural anxieties about impotence or prostitution. Instead, attending to the sexual-logistical knowledges entailed in the sexual practice represented in Nashe's poem allows scholars to see "The Choise of Valentines" as representing a series of politically ambivalent sexual interactions which both produce and circumscribe

[103] Though he is not focused on sexual logistics, James Bromley has similarly argued that "failures of intimacy" might serve as methodological entry points into non-normative early modern pleasures and desires (*Intimacy* 1).

gendered power relations at the local level. In shuttling ambivalently between various organizations of sexual power, the poem inscribes a micro-level sexual interaction that resists any particular ideological closure. At any given moment, that is, it is far from clear, both logistically and politically, who is on top—a reality that would go unnoticed if one were reading primarily in order to explicate sexual discourses like, for instance, chastity, adultery, or an even more diffuse "patriarchy." The political contingencies and eccentricities of representations of historical sexual practice should encourage scholars to be open to reconfiguring the frames of our critical apparatus, strategically shifting from the very big ("prostitution") to the very small (rubbing and chafing, dandling and dancing), and charting the meso-level trails (the accumulated sexual knowledges produced by micro-level acts) that connect them in order to develop a thicker sense of the contours of early modern sexuality. In so doing, we might develop a more welcome attitude toward the critical "surprise" that Traub has called on historians of sexuality to take up as a queer and feminist "disposition" toward "sexual regimes," both historical and contemporary.[104]

Bold Hands and Skillful Pilots: Early Modern Penis-Guiding

In *The School of Venus*, when Frank begins to lay out for Katy the "Precepts of Love," she reports how her husband taught her about sex. "He shewed me all manner of Fucking wayes," she says, "and convinced me there was as much skill in keeping Time a Fucking, as there was in Musick."[105] Though Frank's husband does know some things about sex—that sexual practice might be a "skill" akin to the rhythmic competencies of making "Musick"—and though

[104] Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 123.
[105] Mudge, 22.

he is apparently sexually knowledgeable enough to show Frank not merely one but *all* "manner of Fucking wayes," Frank's husband nevertheless has trouble penetrating her vagina. He thus must rely on *her* sexual-logistical expertise. She recounts how she "took him by the Prick and led him to the Bed, and throwing my self Backwards, and pulling him upon me, having his Prick in my Hand, I guided, and he thrust it into my Cunt up to the Top, that he made the Bed crack again."[106] Frank's husband may know some things about sex, but he does not know *everything,* since Frank is the one who must take charge, taking him "by the Prick" and "guid[ing]" his penis into her vagina. Once Frank has successfully guided him in, her husband does know how to "thrust," and apparently he does so forcefully enough to make "the Bed crack *again*," a repetition of a previous bed cracking that suggests that this instance of penis-guiding may be, for Frank and her husband, a regular occurrence.

Though Frank frames this as a pedagogical scene that echoes aspects of Aretino's and Nashe's poems, it is unclear who should be considered the student and who the teacher. At any given moment, either Frank or her husband may perform either role. Though they practice marital, potentially reproductive, penis-in-vagina sex, the details of their sexual practice defy easy categorization as simply "normative." Frank—grabbing her husband's penis, pulling him across the room and on top of her, and guiding his penis into her vagina—is hardly a passive sexual object. Even as the text casts her husband as the sexual pedagogue, it also positions Frank as an agential, knowledgeable sexual subject. Indeed, her sexual-logistical knowledge—a knowledge, in this case, of her own body—is the necessary condition of this sex act, since there would be no penetration without her guidance.

And yet, given her contention that it is her husband who taught her "all manner of

[106] Mudge, 22.

Fucking wayes," it is analytically inadequate simply to reverse patriarchal expectations and claim that Frank is an unequivocal sexual agent in this scenario. What may seem, at the analytic level of the discursive sexual field, to be an iteration of the dominant heterosexist patriarchal ideology—penis-in-vagina sex between a man and a woman within the bounds of wedlock where the man is, quite literally, on top—turns out to be, at the analytic level of the phenomenological practice of sex, a far more politically ambivalent set of sexual and epistemological negotiations. Here power, knowledge, and pleasure travel reciprocally back and forth between partners. Whether passing between partners in the midst of a tryst or passing between female characters discussing their past and future sexual encounters, sexual-logistical knowledge carries no necessary and preordained relation to political agency, no easy analytic rubric within which critics might categorize it as politically meaning one thing or another.

Penis-guiding, according to Frank, is not merely an eccentricity of her relationship with her husband, but a key aspect of male-female sexual relations. In her explanation of why men "are glad to use all the Monysyllabic words they can think of" while having sex, for instance, Frank uses penis-guiding as the paradigmatic example of talking dirty: "For the heat of love will neither give us leave or time to run divisions," she says, "so that all we can pronounce is, come my dear Soul, take me by the Prick, and put it into thy Cunt."[107] In an attempt to underscore for Katy that sexual practice is extemporaneous and fast-paced—that, in "the heat of love" there is only time to pronounce short "Monysyllabic words" like "Soul," "Prick," and "Cunt"—Frank imagines a sexual scenario, much like the one she had recounted earlier, in which a man asks her to "take [him] by the Prick" and to "put it into [her] Cunt." This imagined request suggests that

[107] Mudge, 44.

penis-guiding is a common practice, since it is the first language Frank reaches for as a pedagogical example.

Figure 3: Fifth Illustration of *The School of Venus* (1680). Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Rem.IV 795, sig. C14r, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10780515-9. Reproduced by permission.

The illustrations that accompany the 1680 edition of *The School of Venus* underscore how frequently early moderns may have practiced penis-guiding, since it is explicitly depicted in five of the volume's thirteen illustrations.[108] One of these images, the fifth illustration in the volume (fig. 3), depicts a naked man and woman who have apparently been overcome with the "heat of Love" during a meal. Abandoning their food and drink on the table, the couple has arranged themselves onto a nearby chair and stool. The woman rests her body atop one of the arms of the chair, reaching her right arm to the other arm of the chair for support. The man uses his arms to

[108] Such visual representations are not unique to *The School of Venus*. Four of the sixteen engravings in Raimondi's *I Modi* also depict penis-guiding. See Talvacchia.

lift the woman's left leg, a position that places both his penis and her vagina in full view of the reader. Printed perpendicular to the prose on the facing page, this image requires the reader to actively turn the book sideways in order to correctly orient the image, an action that engages them actively in the viewing process. Almost every image printed in this volume is printed perpendicular to the text in this way, and all but one of the images openly display the genitalia of the couples they portray—a representational through-line that unites otherwise disparate depictions of various couples in a variety of sexual positions. At least for this text's compiler, genital visibility is a key component of pornographic eroticism.

But this illustration's display of genitalia does more than simply titillate its viewer. It also inscribes a sexual-logistical relationship akin to the ones narrated in its accompanying text. Presumably in an attempt to gain access to the woman's vagina, the man lifts her left thigh with his left arm. Though this action suggests a certain level of sexual-logistical knowledge and skill—he has to know, for instance, that he wants to penetrate his lover's vagina, and he has to know where her vagina is, in order for him to lift her leg in this way—it also suggests a certain level of sexual-logistical ignorance, or at least infelicity, since it requires the man to lean forward awkwardly, a position that keeps him from easily penetrating his lover. Much like Frank and her husband, the woman in this image aids her male lover, reaching her left arm down between their bodies, taking hold of his penis, and guiding it into her vagina. Though it may be that the portrayal of genitalia is part and parcel of this image's erotic frisson, the portrayal of penis-guiding, while it may be erotic, is certainly not key to the image's pornographic function, since a majority of the illustrations in this volume manage to openly portray both male and female genitalia without resorting to the penis-guiding trope. Where other images in *The School of*

Venus may seem, at an historical distance, *merely* pornographic, the penis-guiding in this image serves as a visual emblem of the sexual-logistical knowledge relations entailed in sexual practice.

Figure 4: Ninth Illustration of *The School of Venus* (1680). Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Rem.IV 795, sig. D10r, urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10780515-9. Reproduced by permission.

Whereas both the man and the woman in this image play important logistical roles, another image of penis-guiding in *The School of Venus* (fig. 4) depicts a woman on top of her male lover, fully in control of the logistics of their sexual scenario. The woman straddles the man, placing one leg to either side of him in a wide stance as he lies back on some surface (perhaps a bed?), supporting himself with each of his hands under his shoulders. His physical activity is, in fact, limited to the exertion required to hold his body up in this awkward position. Whereas the couple in the first image are naked, this couple retains most of their clothing. The woman has rolled her dress up over her legs, turning her genitalia out toward the reader.

Grasping her lover's penis with her left hand, she parts her labia with the penis's head as she guides it into her vagina. She rests her right hand, curled into a fist, against her right thigh, pointing downwards with her index finger in a gesture that suggests, perhaps, that she sees this moment as pedagogical. "Here," she seems to say to her lover as she points toward his penis, "this is how you do it." But, much like Frank's penis-guiding, it is not clear, exactly, that this woman-on-top is unequivocally in a position of sexual power over her lover. Even as the woman's actions might be logistically necessary for penetration to occur, her facial expressions—and thus, perhaps, her affect—contrast sharply with his. Lying back on the surface, the man smiles with pleasure as the woman guides his penis into her vagina. Her lips, on the other hand, form a straight line and her eyes seem to squint—a body language that may be an expression of penetrative pleasure (or pain), but may just as easily be an expression of annoyance and frustration with her supine lover.

The representation of penis-guiding, and the equivocal sexual politics it entails, also makes its way into early modern lyric poetry. For instance, even though the speaker of Rochester's "Imperfect Enjoyment" claims that his lover's "nimble tongue," which "plaied / Within [his] Mouth," has "to [his] thoughts conveyed / Swift Orders" that he should "throw" his "all dissolving Thunderbolt beloe" (ll. 7-10), it is not clear that he possesses the sexual-logistical knowledge to carry out these "orders" to penetrate his lover since, much like Frank, it is his lover whose "buisy hand [. . .] guide[s] that part / Which shou'd convey my soul up to her heart" (ll. 13-14).[109] And this "buisy hand" that serves as a logistical "guide" for the libertine rake's "part"—a "part" that, in Rochester's poem, offers nothing to its female guide but disappointment—is not merely a Restoration phenomenon. Thomas Carew's "A Rapture," first

[109] Citations of Rochester's poetry refer to Harold Love's Oxford edition (1999) of his complete works.

published in his posthumous *Poems* (1640), includes an extended metaphor in which the speaker's penis, his "tall pine," is a boat in the "smooth, calm ocean" of his mistress's body. Boats, though, need captains to sail them. The poem reads:

> My Rudder, with thy bold hand, like a tryde
> And skilful Pilot, thou shalt steere, and guide
> My Bark into Loves channell, where it shall
> Dance, as the bounding waves doe rise or fall. (ll. 87-90)[110]

In these lines, Carew's poem articulates, within a largely conventional blazon of the female body, both a reciprocal sexual-logistical knowledge relation and the particularity of the practice of penis-guiding. Carew's poem echoes the language of Nashe's "Choise" when the speaker suggests that his penis—which is simultaneously a "tall pine," the "bark" (i.e. boat) that's made of it, and the "rudder" on that boat—will "dance" in "love's channel." But he supplements Nashe's language with the suggestion that his lover will "steer" and "guide" his penis into her, a solution to at least some of that pesky bending and folding that led Francis to swear off men for her dildo. But whereas Frank's description of penis-guiding relied on relatively straightforward "Monysyllabic" words like "Prick" and "Cunt," Carew's poem offers up a metaphorical invocation of penis-guiding—a literary troping of sexual logistics that suggests that penis-guiding was a readily legible sexual practice for Carew's readers. After all, you have to know something—though, importantly, not everything—about penises being guided into vaginas for the conceit of rudder, bark, pilot, and channel to make sexual sense.

Indeed, Carew's invocation and representation of this sexual-logistical knowledge was evidently so readily legible that fifty years after its first publication, and nineteen years after the final seventeenth-century edition of Carew's *Poems* appeared in 1671, these lines were stripped

[110] Citations of Carew's poetry refer to Rhodes Dunlap's Oxford edition (1949) of his complete poems.

of their original poetic context and presented as sexual advice. In a section of the 1690 edition of the popular medical treatise, *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, entitled "A Word of Advice to both Sexes: or, Directions Respecting the Act of Coition, or Carnal Copulation," the compiler of the *Masterpiece* instructs couples to "let every thing that looks like Care and Business, be banished from their Thoughts . . . and let 'em, to invigorate their Fancies, survey the lovely Beauties of each other, and bear the bright Idea's of them in their Minds."[111] Once their heads are in the right place, the compiler instructs them that in order to truly stir up their desires, the man should then "delineate the Scene of their approaching Happiness, to his fair languishing Bride, in some such amorous Rapture as this":

> Now my fair Bride, now will I storm the Mint
> Of Love and Joy, and rifle all that's in't:
> Now my infranchis'd Hand on every Side,
> Shall o're thy naked polish'd Iv'ry slide: (ll. 29-30)
> Freely shall now my longing Eyes behold
> Thy bared Snow, and thy unbraided Gold. (ll. 27-28)
> No Curtains now, tho' of transparent Lawn,
> Shall be before thy Virgin-Treasure drawn: (ll. 31-32)
> I will enjoy thee, now my Fairest, come,
> And fly with me to Love's Elizium. (ll. 1-2)
> My Rudder, with thy bold Hand, like a try'd,
> and skillful Pilot, thou shalt steer; and guide
> My Bark in Love's Channel, where it shall
> Dance, as the bounding Waves do rise and fall; (ll. 87-90)
> Whilst my tall Pinnace in thy Cyprian Strait,
> Rides safe at Anchor, and unlades her Freight. (ll. 85-86)

[111] *Aristotle's Compleat Master-piece*, 32, hereafter cited as *Masterpiece*. Unless otherwise noted, all citations of the *Masterpiece* refer to the edition of 1690. I have silently modernized the long-s. Because so much of the *Masterpiece* is culled from earlier texts, I follow Porter and Hall in referring to the "compiler" of the text, rather than its "author." I also use "they" as a gender-neutral pronoun, simultaneously singular and plural, as a reminder that we cannot readily assume that the persons assembling any given edition of the *Masterpiece* were men.

These lines are a remix of Carew's poem.[112] The compiler of the *Masterpiece* has combed through Carew's poem, pulled particular couplets, and arranged them in a new order (I have indicated to the side where the lines of this *Masterpiece* remix occur in Carew's original poem). In their revision of Carew's poem, the compiler of the *Masterpiece* has excised long, abstract passages and preferred, instead, the more concrete—if still metaphorical—sexual descriptions. For instance, Carew's poem begins with its speaker instructing his lover not to fear "Honour," an abstract concept anthropomorphized as a "Gyant" that, he writes, "keepes cowards" (l. 3) from the joys of "Loves Elizium" (l. 2). While "Loves Elizium" is apparently straightforward enough to merit inclusion in the *Masterpiece* remix, neither this "Gyant" nor the poem's long passages about the lovers' "soules" that "in dreams have leisure" to "taste" "the embraces of [their] bodyes" make the cut (ll. 41-44).

In plucking out and reordering particular couplets from Carew's poem, the compiler of the *Masterpiece* creates a sequence of sexual actions that is recognizable today as a fairly conventional heterosexual logistical script, moving from what we might consider foreplay to penetration to ejaculation. In order, the speaker claims he will: touch his lover's body ("Now my infranchis'd Hand on every Side / Shall o're thy naked polish'd Iv'ry slide"); look her over ("Freely shall now my longing Eyes behold"); undress her ("No Curtains [i.e. clothes] now"); have her guide his penis into her ("guide / My Bark in Love's Channel"); thrust ("it shall / Dance"); and ejaculate ("unlades her Freight"). The compiler has also made a few minor emendations, revising Carew's "From our close Ivy twines, there I'le behold / Thy bared snow,

[112] A few scholars have noticed the presence of this poem in the *Masterpiece*, but—largely because many of them are historians of medicine, and not primarily interested in poetry—none have discussed it at any length. In 1981, in a brief letter to the editor in response to an *American Scholar* article by Peter Gay entitled "Victorian Sexuality: Old Texts and New Insights," Philip Harth was the first to identify these lines as a "pastiche of verses" from Carew. Porter and Hall print the entire poem without attributing it to Carew and without any comment, other than labeling it "mildly risqué doggerel" (38). The most in-depth discussion occurs in Fissell, "Remaking," 122-23.

and thy unbraided gold" (ll. 27-28) to the non-site specific bravado of "Freely shall now my longing Eyes behold / Thy bared Snow." They have also added the first couplet, which, in its metaphor of the "Mint / Of Love and Joy," frames this poem's sexual actions as specifically reproductive, since the couple produces offspring as if they were minting money.[113] Perhaps the most significant emendation, though, is the compiler's decision to revise Carew's first line, "I will enjoy thee now, my Celia, come" and to address the poem instead to "my Fairest." What was originally a poetic address to a somewhat specific, though pastorally generic, "Celia" becomes, in the more explicitly pedagogical world of *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, a generic set of "Directions" applicable to any "Fairest" with whom one might happen to find oneself in bed.[114]

But even as the *Masterpiece* compiler excises flights of lyric fancy from Carew's original poem in order to create a sexual-logistical script to be read out before engaging in the sex acts it "delineate[s]," they also, surprisingly, excise passages where Carew explicitly thematizes sexual pedagogy. In the penultimate verse paragraph of Carew's poem, the speaker recounts to his lover how "the Roman *Lucrece* [. . .] reads the divine / Lectures of Loves great master, *Aretine*" (ll. 115-16, emphasis in the original). The story of Lucrece—a Roman noblewoman who was raped by Tarquin, one of her husband's houseguests, and who subsequently committed suicide in order to assert her chastity—was, because it was recounted by Livy and Augustine, a cultural touchstone in early modern European literature.[115] But Carew's depiction of Lucrece's sexual pedagogy—her reading of "the divine / Lectures" of Aretino (presumably his pornographic prose

[113] For a reading of the economic valence of these lines, see Fissell, "Remaking," (122-123). The compiler's addition of these lines is somewhat curious, since Carew includes an almost identical—and even more clearly reproductive—metaphor in his original poem: "[we] shall ready still for mintage lie, / And we will coin young Cupids" (ll. 34-35).

[114] The name "Celia" was something of a pastoral convention: Shakespeare and Jonson both use the name, for instance. Nevertheless, the *Masterpiece* author seems to have not found the name "Celia" to be as portable as the lyric "I."

[115] See, for instance, Shakespeare's narrative poem, *The Rape of Lucrece*.

dialogues, the *Ragionamenti*, rather than his *Sonneti*)—erases the sexual violence at the heart of her story. Far from being the victim of a sexual assault, Carew's Lucrece is a sexual autodidact, reading Aretino in order to teach herself how to "move / Her plyant body in the act of love" (ll. 117-18).

A few lines later, Carew's speaker also invokes the Ovidian tale of Daphne, a woman who turns into a tree in order to escape the unwanted sexual advances of Apollo. Much like his sexually curious Lucrece, though, Carew's Daphne is not the victim of a sexual assault, but a willing participant in a sexual tryst, since she "hath broke her barke" and "now unfetter'd run[s], / To meet th'embraces of the youthfull" Apollo (ll. 131-34). In these perverse reversals of classical tales of sexual violence, Carew activates and intermingles two meanings of his titular "Rapture": euphoria and rape. Unlike the more anodyne *Masterpiece* remix, the sexual-logistical knowledge in Carew's poem is bound up, for the woman it represents, in both pleasure and potential violence. But in fact, even as the *Masterpiece* version appears to have excised this danger, it still carries its textual traces, since the *Masterpiece* compiler labels the poem an "amorous Rapture," a phrase that might signal an erotic euphoria as readily as it might signal the misogynist oxymoron of a "loving rape." Carew's supposedly erotic cooptation of violent classical poetic tropes and the *Masterpiece*'s further suppression of the violence that limns Carew's poem can thus serve as a reminder to historians of sexuality that—though they may, as I have been arguing, strategically and temporarily bracket an analysis of the "broader social" discourses that shape sexuality in any given period in order to reconstruct historical sexual practice—they must nevertheless still attend to the relations of power, often highly inequitable, that emerge in sexual scenarios. Not to do so would be to fundamentally misunderstand the lived experience and knowledge of historical sexual actors. Sometimes what is known, after all, is that

one's partner can become violent.

Even as they excise, to some extent, the sexual violence from Carew's poem, the *Masterpiece* compiler nevertheless reinscribes the same ambivalent politics that has accompanied the other representations of penis-guiding I have discussed. The readers of the *Masterpiece* learn by a very specific example, one which leaves the "fair languishing Bride" in the impossible position of being simultaneously a "Virgin-Treasure" and yet also a "try'd / and skillful Pilot." Just as the women in *The School of Venus* are simultaneously knowledgeable and ignorant, the everywoman of the *Masterpiece*'s "Fairest" is expected to both know and not know the ins and outs of sexual practice—to know how to "steer" and "guide" her lover's penis into "Love's Channel," and also, somehow, never to have done this before. While this impossible expectation is one of patriarchy's tools for the domination of women, it paradoxically installs her as the logistical *primum mobile* of the reproductive sex the *Masterpiece* scripts. A 1733 edition of the *Masterpiece* drives home this ambivalent politics of misogyny and empowerment when it adds a single word to Carew's description of penis-guiding. "Thou shalt steer, and guide / My Bark," it reads, "in Love's *dark* Channel."[116] Confronted with the supposed "dark[ness]" of female genitalia, this compiler imagines that men are ascribed a sexual-logistical ignorance that is simultaneously an epistemological privilege and a barrier to sexual action. Women, in this compiler's imagination, are the only ones who know how to sail in the dark.

Given their extensive revisions to "A Rapture," it seems clear that the compiler of the 1690 edition of *Aristotle's Masterpiece* saw Carew's poem not as an aesthetic object whose formal integrity was essential to its value—they did not see it, that is, as a *lyric*—but as a set of conceptual propositions about, and for inciting, desire and sexual practice. Of all the possible

[116] *Masterpiece*, "19th edition," 41, emphasis added.

erotic poetry of the seventeenth century, they saw these particular lines as *the* lines that could "delineate the Scene" of the sex to which they were preamble—*the* lines, that is, that could serve as "Directions Respecting the Act of Coition," a phrase that echoes *The School of Venus*'s promise of sexual "Rules of Practice." In their study of sexual advice literature, Roy Porter and Lesley Hall claim that the *Masterpiece* offers "no training in coital positions" and that "the compiler did not see his [sic] main task as to give readers instructions in the basic performance of the sexual act itself."[117] Whether it was the compiler's *main* task, the inclusion of Carew's poem in the *Masterpiece* belies these critical claims.

Penis-guiding may not exactly be a "position" *per se*, but its frequent representation in bawdy and pornographic literatures and images—including in Raimondi's *I Modi*, "the Positions"—suggests that it is position-like. In fact, because penis-guiding does not clearly conform to notions of sexual positions, it might serve for critics as a reminder that our most basic categories of sexual analysis can sometimes unhelpfully sediment our presumptive knowledge about what constitutes the "performance of the sexual act itself," basic or otherwise.[118] While the notion of a "position" might usefully index a particular organization of sexual-logistical knowledge, it also has the potential to render invisible the micro-interactions—like, for instance, penis-guiding—involved in the performance of that position. The critical turn to, in Traub's words, "the details of actual sexual practices" must be accompanied, then, by a careful consideration of the epistemological categories that structure our notions of what counts as "sexual practice."[119] Even though "penis-guiding" has not yet emerged as a recognizable sexual

[117] Porter and Hall, 39.
[118] Fisher's work on "chin chucking," an early modern sex act that does not conform to the rubric of "position," puts a similar pressure onto critical assumptions about what constitutes sex. For more on presumptive knowledge, see *Thinking Sex*, passim.
[119] Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 14.

practice for historians of sexuality, it can serve as a salient reminder that our own understanding of the "performance of the sexual act itself" (itself incoherent and non-self-identical) need not be—and probably is not—the same as early moderns' understanding.

Indeed, given the wide circulation of *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, the penis-guiding depicted in its remix of Carew's poem might well have been one of the primary rubrics within which early moderns imagined and understood sexual practice. Mary Fissell, the preeminent scholar of the *Masterpiece*, notes that "by the mid-eighteenth century, there were more editions of [*Aristotle's Masterpiece*] than all other popular books on reproduction combined."[120] And as Tim Hitchcock observes, "the anonymous *Masterpiece* went through at least forty-three editions by 1800 and was an almost mandatory present for any newlywed couple."[121] The remix of Carew's poem, then, which appears in many—though not quite all—editions of the *Masterpiece*, lies at the center of a text that, for hundreds of years, was nearly synonymous with sex itself.[122] How many couples, across the two centuries in which it was consistently re-edited and reprinted, kept this book on their nightstand, or secreted it away in a bed chest that may have also held the

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[120] Fissell, "Remaking," 1.

[121] Hitchcock, "Reformulation," 828-29. In fact, one eighteenth-century version of the *Masterpiece* is still in "print" today. It is available as a free e-book on Amazon.com.

[122] Across its long print history, the *Masterpiece* circulated in a dizzying variety of forms and editions. Porter and Hall (54-64) offer a schema of three different versions. Their categorizations, though, are not always entirely accurate—what they call Version 3, for instance, and date to the "twelfth" edition appearing in the early eighteenth century, actually appears first in the "eleventh" edition of 1690. (The numbers of the editions, which I place in scare quotes, seem to have been used as marketing techniques. They are wholly unreliable as markers of the text's editorial progression, since the number any particular compiler chose to label their edition with was more or less random.) I have located Carew's poem in all of the editions of "Version 3" printed between 1690-1799 that I have been able to consult. Carew's poem seems to have been expunged from at least some of the editions printed in the nineteenth century, but because there were so many editions in print, many earlier editions were still circulating and being read throughout the nineteenth century. Fissell, for instance, notes that a first edition held by the University of Pennsylvania includes both an inscription dated 1685 and records of births from the first two decades of the nineteenth century, indicating that the same copy was still in use well over a century after it was printed. Capturing the way this book was passed down from generation to generation, Fissell argues that, for some readers, "the book functioned. . .like a family bible" ("When the Birds and Bees Were Not Enough"). For the historical shift in sexual mores that drove the expurgation of Carew's poem from some nineteenth-century editions, see Porter and Hall (128-31). And yet, despite this Victorian moralism, Bullough notes that a new printing of the *Masterpiece* in 1930s London "was literally unchanged from the eighteenth century edition" (237).

"Cundums" that are celebrated in one early eighteenth-century panegyric?[123] How many couples took its advice seriously and literally enough to read out Carew's lines as they slipped off their clothes and began to touch each other—following, among its many instructions, the poem's incitement to penis-guiding? How many people, performing this sexual-poetic ritual over and over again across their lives, committed these lines to memory, playing them in their heads as their daily thoughts—piqued by this or that alluring encounter—turned to the sex that they had had, and the sex that they planned to have? How many times must men and women both, to countless partners, in countless places, and with countless intents, have rolled off their tongues: "I will enjoy thee, now my Fairest, come?"

Carew is sometimes referred to as a minor poet, interesting mainly for his association with Ben Jonson.[124] But given the presence of his poem in this particular text, one of the central loci of early modern sex advice, it seems likely that Carew held considerable sway over the sex lives of the early moderns. Not exactly an abstract discursive force shaping the "broader social" sphere of early modern England, Carew's poem was an actual presence in the spaces of early modern sexuality. It was right there in the bedroom, inciting desire and guiding practice.

The Will to Know-How

In fact, we have one early eighteenth-century record of how *Aristotle's Masterpiece* (if not specifically Carew's poem) guided the sexual practice of a young Englishman. In his

[123] See Mudge, 246n12, for a reprint of "A Panegryick upon Cundums," which he dates to 1702-1703. The poem ends somewhat ecstatically: "Happy the Man, who in his Pocket keeps, / Whether with green or scarlet Ribband bound, / A well made Cundum—He, nor dreads the Ills / Of Shankers of Cordee, or Bubos dire!"

[124] As Margaret Ezell notes, "As much space has been devoted to the analysis of Thomas Carew's obscurity as to his accomplishments as a poet" (99).

memoirs, John Cannon, an excise officer from Somerset, recounts how when he was a child his father would sometimes give him money to spend at the fair, and how he would stow away some of this money without his father's knowledge. This "residue of my money," he writes, "I layd out in some low-priz'd books such as did not exceed the price of a shilling when I came where they were sold, viz. The Seven Champions, Fortunatus, Parismus, Dr. Faustus, The Wars of England, Extraordinary Events, & the like, in which at that time I greatly delighted but concealed my small study from my parents for my private reading."[125] Cannon's canon here is largely one of heroic tales of knightly saints, like Richard Johnson's *Famous Historie of the Seven Champions of Christendom*, and morality tales from the turn of the previous century, like Dekker's *Fortunatus* or Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*.

It is all the more striking, then, that the book that he spends the most time discussing is neither romance nor morality tale. "Amongst the many books I delighted in," he writes, "I got Aristotle's Masterpiece which cost one shilling which I got to pry into the Secrets of Nature especially of the female sex." This book, he goes on to warn his reader, "was very pernicious,"

> for it was not only the reading part but gave me occasion of many temptations to watch the servant-maid when nature directed her to do her occasions at any place but more especially at the necessary house, which [to] further curiosity I made holes through the boards near the seat, & so planting myself at a small distance in an adjoining linny house, I could plainly see that parts my lustful thought provoked & stirred me up unto.[126]

Cannon's reading so "stirred" him that he was moved to take the theoretical knowledge of the "Secrets of Nature" that he had acquired from the pages of *Aristotle's Masterpiece* and to put this knowledge into practice by spying on his family's maid as she took some private time in the outhouse ("the necessary house"). Much as Carew's poem turned the sexual violation of classical

[125] Cannon, 35.
[126] Cannon, 35-36.

women into tales of sexual pedagogy and pleasure for men, so too Cannon invades this woman's privacy, literally "pry[ing] into the Secrets of Nature" by spying on her while she was unawares. While the *Masterpiece* may have instilled in him a desire to know more about sex, it clearly did not teach him about consent—another sexual knowledge that does not come "naturally" to sexual actors, and, in a patriarchal society, especially to men. But Cannon's spying so stirs up his desires that he goes beyond simply observing his family's maid. In order to "remedy" these "lustful thought[s]," he says, "the aforementioned practice of my school fellows was sometimes put in practice, which was not without a remorse or serious reflexion upon the vanity of such folly."[127] What is this aforementioned practice? Masturbation.

Earlier in his memoirs Cannon details how, when he was in school, the younger boys would mingle with the older boys at their lunchtime break, sometimes playing on the banks of a river not far from their schoolhouse. He writes that in 1696, during one of these lunch breaks, the oldest boy from the Scrace family who was "about 17" years old,

> took an occasion to show the rest, what he would do if he had a female in place, and withal took his privy member in his hand, rubbing it up & down until it was erected & in short followed emission. The same was he said in copulation & withal advised more of the boys to do the same, telling them that although the first act would be attended with pain yet by frequent use they would find a deal of pleasure, on which several attempted and found it as he said. Indeed, courteous friend, I cannot excuse myself for being one of his pupills at the same time.[128]

Taking a break from their schoolwork, Cannon and his friends continue to be "pupills" who follow the lead of the Scrace boy. Sexual pedagogy, at least in this scenario, is a process of observation and emulation. Cannon's story give historians a glimpse of not only an actual

[127] ibid., 36.
[128] Cannon, 26.

historical sex act, but also the pedagogical language ("advise" and "pupill") and setting (the schoolyard) that surround such an act. Where the Scrace boy learned how to masturbate Cannon does not say. But whether he learned it by accidentally stimulating himself, by watching another boy masturbate, or by inferring from witnessing other sex acts, he clearly learned it *somewhere*. If all the other boys in the school needed to be taught to masturbate, surely the Scrace boy would have needed the same education.

Cannon's masturbatory spying on his family's maid, spurred on by his reading of *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, was not an aberration of that book's sex advice; it was an expected result of peering into "the Secrets of Nature" via medical books, as least for young men. Cannon records, for instance, the fact that he also bought Culpepper's *Directory for Midwives* "which only served for a further inlet into youth's forbidden secrets of nature."[129] He fails to be as surreptitious in his reading of Culpepper as he normally was, though, and he relates how, once, "my Mother being nearer me than I thought, caught it from me & I never could ever see or finger it afterwards."[130] Cannon's mother immediately recognizes that Culpepper's text, like the *Masterpiece*, served to guide and incite sexual practice, to impart the knowledge of the "secrets of nature" that should be "forbidden" to "youth." At least in the case of the *Masterpiece*, these associations lingered all the way into the twentieth century. Janet Blackman relates A.L. Rowse's remark that he did not tell his parents he was studying Aristotle as an undergraduate at Oxford in the early twentieth century because "Aristotle would have meant to my mother, as secretly to Victorian women, his book on childbearing: unmentionable. But I knew that book was secreted in her chest of drawers in the old home. That was what the sage meant to the people."[131]

[129] ibid., 36.
[130] ibid., 36.
[131] Blackman, 60.

* * *

Rowse's distinction between what "the sage" meant to his peers and tutors at Oxford and what he meant to "the people" like his mother is a useful emblem for the analyses that I have performed in this chapter. If, for the scholars at Oxford, the name "Aristotle" signified a set of texts and *theories* about the relationship between language, art, and meaning, for Rowse's mother—and for those other "Victorian women"—it signified a set of *directions* for "childbearing," one which was taboo, "unmentionable," because it was so clearly and intimately connected to sexual practice. Similarly, where other historians of sexuality have tracked the macro-level connections between various institutional and discursive constructions of sexuality, I have tried to be attentive to the potential disconnects between the sexual abstractions produced by these institutions and the ongoing, quotidian sexual practices that these abstractions attempted to describe and circumscribe. As much as I can, I have resisted offering a theory of sexuality in favor of offering a description of sex. I have tried, that is, to nestle myself not into the halls of Oxford, but into the "chest of drawers" of early modern women and men.

As I discussed in the introduction, early in the first dialogue of *The School of Venus*, Katy airs an anxiety about her impending first sexual encounter. "Pray tell me what your Husband doth to you when he lyes with you," she asks Frank, "for I would not willingly altogether appear a Novice, when I shall arrive to that great happiness of being fucked."[132] Here, Katy's conjecture about her future sexual practice is just as bound up in an imagined future "happiness" as it is in the anxiety about the potential embarrassment she may experience should she "appear a Novice." Though she imagines her future self as a sexual object, a passive party "being fucked," she also imagines herself as a sexual agent, one who must have some sexual-logistical knowledge and

[132] Mudge, 17.

skill in order to not give the impression to her partner that she does not know what she is doing. What Katy articulates here is a desire for an embodied knowledge of sexual logistics, some guidance for her future sexual practice—perhaps, in the words of *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, some "Directions Respecting the Act of Coition," or, to use the subtitle of the work in which Katy's request appears, some "Rules of Practice." She wants to know, that is, *how* to do it.

Because her desire for sexual-logistical knowledge coheres into neither a sexual identity nor, exactly, any particular sex act, the history of sexuality has few tools for recognizing and analyzing Katy's request. But what Katy is asking for here is something like the knowledge that Francis and Tomalin develop together as they improvise more and more varied sexual actions; the knowledge that has made "Madam S— W—" the "*Summum Bonum*" of sex; the knowledge that the women who read, or had read to them, the *Aristotle's Masterpiece* remix of Carew's "A Rapture" were asked to have; and the knowledge John Cannon acquires from the Scrace boy down by the river. Katy's desire for sexual-logistical knowledge evinces not a Foucauldian discursive will to knowledge but a more local and contingent will to *know-how*.[133] Katy's desire, and the desires of the women she is imagined to stand in for, is less a *volonté de savoir* and more a *volonté de savoir faire*.[134]

Attending to this know-how can reshape some of the fundamental assumptions and critical practices of the history of sexuality. For instance, based on demographic data that demonstrate that fertility rates in England dramatically increased over the course of the eighteenth century, Henry Abelove and Tim Hitchcock have argued that it is only in this period that penis-in-vagina sex becomes *the* normative sex act. "By the end of the [eighteenth] century,"

[133] Though it is beyond the scope of this chapter to take up these debates, philosophers have debated whether knowledge of how to do something constitutes a special form of knowledge. See, for instance, Stanley.
[134] "La volonté de savoir" is the French subtitle of the first volume of Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*.

Hitchcock argues, "putting a penis in a vagina became the dominant sexual activity—all other forms of sex becoming literally fore-play."[135] It may well be the case that this historical shift in sexual practice was fundamentally underwritten by, as Abelove claims, the ascendancy of a capitalist ideology that concatenated the "rise in production" and the "rise in the popularity of the sexual act that uniquely makes for reproduction."[136] But an analytic recourse to the macro-level abstraction of a capitalist zeitgeist without the specification of particular meso- and micro-level mechanisms through which such a zeitgeist manifested itself in the everyday lives of the British men and women engaging in this penis-in-vagina sex can only take us so far. I offer, then, another possible explanation for this apparent rise in penis-in-vagina sex. Given that, as Hitchcock observes, *Aristotle's Masterpiece* was an "almost mandatory present for every newlywed couple"[137] the wide circulation of Carew's depiction of, and incitement to, penis-guiding may well have provided a sexual-logistical script that encouraged penis-in-vagina sex over and above the "kissing and fondling" that Hitchcock claims characterized earlier male-female sexual practice.[138]

The literary and visual representations I have analyzed in this chapter suggest that vaginal penetration with a penis—"sexual intercourse so-called"—is hardly an historical constant, the instinctual expression of an innate libido that has been, and will always be, the same. As Abelove suggests, "the immense weight of privilege that has long accrued to sexual intercourse so-called has made its vicissitudes virtually invisible."[139] The virtuosic actions of Francis and Tomalin and the historical practice of penis-guiding render those vicissitudes visible. These actions

[135] Hitchcock, "Redefining," 79.
[136] Abelove, 26.
[137] Hitchcock, "Reformulation," 829.
[138] Hithcock, "Redefining," 79.
[139] Abelove, xiv.

demonstrate, for instance, that the rubric of "penis-in-vagina sex" not only flattens, conflates, and elides a variety of historical sexual actions and historical sexual desires, but also renders invisible some of the more specific sexual-logistical knowledges that make those actions—and perhaps even desires—possible.[140]

And because penis-in-vagina sex exerts an "immense weight" of normativizing pressure on analyses of sexuality *per se*, the denaturalization of penile-vaginal penetration also opens up new questions for scholars interested in other forms of historical sexual practice. For instance, while scholars have thoroughly traced the contours of the "broader social" meanings and effects of sodomy in early modern England, the quotidian sexual experiences and sexual-logistical knowledges of men who had penetrative anal sex with men—one of the many things sodomy might mean, and one of the many things that Meredith Davy and John Vicary may have been doing together in that Minehead bed—have not received comparable critical attention. If the men and women reading *Aristotle's Masterpiece* needed logistical instructions for the practice of socially-sanctioned sex, then men who had penetrative anal sex with men may have had to find more covert avenues through which to obtain and disseminate the sexual-logistical knowledges necessary to practice that non-sanctioned act. And given the discourses of "impossibility" that surrounded female-female sexual practice, it is a major epistemological achievement, and one that has not yet been fully explicated, that women who had sex with women were able to acquire the sexual-logistical knowledges that made their sex lives possible.[141]

Women's acquisition of the sexual-logistical knowledges necessary to have sex with men

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[140] Such a laying bare of the vicissitudes of various sexual formations constitutes one form of a "queer theory without antinormativity" that Elizabeth Wilson and Robyn Wiegman have recently called for, since the exposure of norms need not necessarily entail, in every instance, their resistance. Sarah Nicolazzo has also recently laid out the critical affordances of "a queer historiography that does not presume the antinormativity of queerness" (4).

[141] For more on the trope of the "impossibility" of female-female sex, as well as the ways in which women pursued sexual possibility despite this trope, see Traub, *Renaissance*.

is also an epistemological achievement worthy of further study. Whether in the guise of Nashe's Francis who is expected to dandle and dance her way to her own sexual satisfaction, or in the guise of Carew's lover—the everywoman of *Aristotle's Masterpiece*—who is expected to be simultaneously a "skilful Pilot" and a "Virgin-treasure," the literary and visual representations I have analyzed suggest that early modern women were neither passive sexual objects nor unequivocal sexual agents. In the case of consensual sex with men, the politics of early modern women's sex lives lay, instead, in the more contingent and ambivalent negotiations of sexual logistics—and, thus, sexual-logistical knowledges—that took place extemporaneously as these women fit their body with another's body. Expected to both guide and follow, it is no wonder that Katy would approach her first sexual encounter with some trepidation, and would therefore want to seek out from a more experienced woman the sexual-logistical knowledges necessary for her to not "appear a Novice." But when women like Katy, by hook or by crook, did acquire some sexual-logistical knowledge, they may well have found themselves able to navigate through the "Thousand little accidents which attend young lovers" and into the pleasures of the "thousand delights [of] Love."[142]

Let us return then, briefly, to the case of Meredith Davy and John Vicary. Whatever they may have been doing in that bed, did Davy and Vicary have to guide their, or their partner's, penis? And where did they guide it—to an anus? A mouth? Between the thighs? Somewhere else? And where did they learn to do this? Did they learn, like Cannon, from a "teacher," or did they learn, like Francis and Tomalin, in the act—or perhaps some combination of the two? If they were indeed cries of pain, were Vicary's cries of pain—the sounds that set the trial in motion—caused by a violent sex act to which he did not consent, or by an unskillful, but desired,

[142] Mudge, 30, 22, respectively.

partner? My analyses of penis-guiding cannot give us the answers to these questions regarding orifices, pedagogy, and consent in the specific case of Davy and Vicary. But, I hope, they can make it possible to ask those questions as our analytic starting point. In the next chapter, I offer an answer to one logistical question we might ask of Davy and Vicary's case: if they did indeed practice anal sex, what were the material conditions of that act? Did they use some form of lubricant? And if so, what?

Chapter Two

Love's Obliging Arts: Lubrication and the Material Conditions of Sexual Practice

In the last chapter, I focused on representations of what *The School of Venus*'s Frank called sexual "accidents" in order to outline some of the many possible processes through which early moderns acquired sexual-logistical knowledge. In this chapter, I first explore another instance of sexual-logistical knowledge making in the Restoration closet drama *Sodom*. This play's concern with the material conditions of penetrative sex—both vaginal and anal—leads me to consider the materials that helped the course of sex run smoother: lubricants. Whether they are considering naturally occurring vaginal lubrication, repurposing slick household goods for sexier purposes, or lamenting the lack of necessary lubricants, early moderns talk about lubrication surprisingly often. It is all the more surprising, then, that there are to date no sustained accounts of early modern lubrication.

I turn to sexual lubrication here because, like penis-guiding, it reorients the focus of the history of sexuality away from sexuality's imbrication in the broader social sphere (lubricants do not really "mean" anything) and toward the phenomenology of sexual practice. Indeed, understanding the material conditions of sexual practice—and the tools, like lubricants, that early moderns used to shape those conditions—illuminates the meso-level of the accumulated sexual knowledges that mediate between micro-level acts (e.g. a specific instance of anal penetration) and macro-level discourses (e.g. sodomy). Lubrication also serves, as I will show, as a useful methodological entry point for scholars interested in the on-the-ground imbrication of gender,

race, and sexual knowledge, since the desire for and use of sexual lubricants can often reveal the material consequences of gendered and raced disparities in sexual knowledge and agency. Both men and women in the Restoration closet drama *Sodom* (ca. 1670s), for instance, discuss the lubrication of vaginal and anal orifices, as well as how the relative sizes of penises and vaginas can affect both the logistics of sex, and the gendered disparities in the pleasure each party is able to garner from the interaction. And, as I will show, lubrication can even serve as the basis for modes of racial thinking that—while clearly racist in their group-differentiating and hierarchizing effects—nevertheless do not rise to the macro-level pronouncements of racial difference and etiology more often taken up by scholars.

As I attempt to account for the critical silence surrounding early modern sexual lubricants, I also turn my attention toward the scholarly "lubricants"—editorial practices like glossing and the assignment of authorship—that ease the way toward the production of knowledge about early modern texts and sexual practice. Pressuring lubrication as a critical metaphor, I ask how the scholarly focus on sexual discourses has led to an editorial practice that may obscure the details of sexual practice. What might the use of lubricants reveal about the circulation of sexual-logistical knowledge?

To answer these questions about lubricants, both sexual and scholarly, I first offer an extended reading of *Sodom,* a little-studied closet drama, written in the mid-1670s and often attributed—perhaps wrongly—to John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. I linger over *Sodom* at length in part because so little has been written about the play, and in part because the play is so deeply invested in the phenomenology of sexual practice (including and especially lubrication and the size of one's genitals). I then turn once again to early modern prose pornography in order to identify some of the materials that were used as sexual lubricants. Finally, I move back in time

from the late-seventeenth century to the early-seventeenth century in order to identify potential references to lubrication in Jacobean city comedy, as well as in sixteenth-century travel writing. But no matter the historical moment, across the variety of texts I read, characters and narrators negotiate broad discursive abstractions like "gender," "race," and "sexuality" through considerations of the phenomenology of sex, and specifically by imagining and detailing the material conditions within which bodies come together for pleasure.

Sodom, Sodomy, and the Phenomenology of Closet Drama

Sodom explicitly thematizes sexual knowledge and sexual pedagogy, even as the play itself is not explicitly framed as didactic.[143] The plot of *Sodom* goes something like this: the king of Sodom, Bolloxinian (that is, King Balls), decides that he is tired of sleeping with women—"my Prick to Bald Cunt shal no more resort," he says (1.33)—and that therefore all of his male subjects should forego vaginal sex in favor of anal sex with men.[144] "I do proclaim," he proclaims, "that Buggery may be vsd / O're all the land so Cunt be not abus'd" (1.69-70). While his general, Buggeranthes (a name which means "man fucker"), goes off to disseminate this proclamation, Bolloxinian's many "catamites" and "pimps"—Pockenello (a pox-laden variant on the *commedia dell'arte* character "Pulcinella"), Borastus (bore-ass), Pine (penis), and Tewly

[143] The textual history of *Sodom* is complex. Harold Love surveys the various manuscript deviations in the textual notes to his edition of Rochester's complete works, from which all my citations appear. For my purposes, the most significant manuscript deviation is the alternate ending included in the manuscript of the work held at Princeton. Love refers to this shorter version of the play as Princeton "A" (*PrA*); this version is, Love says, unique to the Princeton MS, whereas the longer version, Princeton "B" (*PrB),* occurs in all of the other extant manuscripts. Both *PrA* and *PrB* are bound together in what used to be Princeton MS AM 14401, but is now known as C0199 Gen. MSS. Citations from the play follow Love's scene divisions, where, for example, the line B2.1 occurs in *PrB* but not in *PrA*, but line 1.1 occurs in both. Lines cited as scene "A0" refer to the prologue found only in *PrA*.

[144] Love's edition of *Sodom* follows his copy texts closely, often rendering the words "Prick" and "Cunt" as "Pr—" and "C—." I have silently filled out these words, and rendered what Love prints as "ff" as "F."

(presumably a reference to the two balls)—offer up their bodies to him for his sexual pleasure. Meanwhile, the women of the court—whose names are even more explicit than the men's: Queen Cuntagratia, Lady Officina, Fuckadilla, Cunticula, and Clitoris—all bemoan their loss of penile-vaginal sex.[145] This loss of sex has so distressed the women that even their menstrual cycles have been upended: "My courses haue beene stopt with greif [*sic*] & care," Cuntagratia laments (2.18). In the shorter *PrA* manuscript, Cuntagratia decides to get her revenge on Bolloxinian by tricking him into having sex with her again—and giving him a deadly pox. In an ending worthy of the tragedies of Shakespeare and Webster, not only does the queen commit a sexual murder-suicide, but the princess, Swivia, kills her brother, Pricket, in the same fashion, leaving Pockenello as a sort of Fortinbras, left to pick up the (many) dead and to rule Sodom with Fuckadilla as his queen.

In the much longer *PrB* manuscript, though, Lady Officina suggests a much more anodyne solution: Queen Cuntagratia, she suggests, should sleep with Buggeranthes, Bolloxinian's general, in order to satisfy her desires. Overcome with passion by this thought, Cuntagratia exclaims "I spring a leake" (B2.64) and at Officina's command—"All hands to pump amaine!" (B2.65)—the ladies-in-waiting begin to "frigg [themselves and each other] in point of Honor" with their dildos as Officina "frigg[s]" the queen with her dildo. These dildos though are "Paultry ware" (B2.73) compared to the penises the women have had, and yearn to have again. What's more, whereas *PrA* obscured the murderous sex between princess Swivia and her younger brother Pricket, *PrB* stages an explicitly pedagogical, and incestuous, sexual interlude between the siblings that occupies the time needed for Buggeranthes to leave the King

[145] Lady Officinia, whose name is less obviously sexual than the others, perhaps suggests that she is "officious" in the sense that she is "eager to serve, help, or please; attentive, obliging" (*OED*, "officius, adj." definition 2).

and to reach Cuntagratia and satisfy her desires. But though he would sleep with her if he could, Buggeranthes comes up short and can no longer achieve an erection, and so he leaves both himself and Cuntagratia unsatisfied as, in one of the most comically understated of all early modern stage directions, he "Exit[s] sadly." Buggeranthes returns to Bolloxinian to report back that the soldiers in his camp have quickly and happily taken to the practice of buggery, but that the women are left, much to their frustration, only with "Dildoes & dogs" (B5.57). The king and his men, trying to decide what to do about this, are interrupted by an emissary from Gommorah's king, Tarsehole, who brings Bolloxinian "forty striplings . . . on Camells" (B5.101) as a sexual tribute, much to Bolloxinian's racist delight, since he "love[s] strange flesh" (B5.105).

Meanwhile, the women call on Virtuoso, the court dildo- and merkin-maker, to bring forth his latest line of dildos.[146] Unsatisfied with the size of these new dildos, the women force Virtuoso to produce his own penis for them to compare and, more importantly, use; but much to their chagrin, he, like Tomalin, ejaculates before penetrating any of them. This is lucky for the women, in fact, since it is soon revealed that all this buggery has led the men to sexually-transmitted ruin. The king's physician, Flux—an early modern word used to describe the involuntary discharges brought on by gonorrhea[147]—rushes in to report that "the heavy Simptom has infected all" and that everyone's "Pricks are eaten off" (B7.24). He implores the king to forbid buggery in order to save his kingdom. And it is not only Bolloxinian's subjects who suffer; his own family does as well. His wife Cuntagratia has (with no explanation) died, and his

[146] A "merkin" is, as the *OED* notes, "an artificial covering of hair for the female pubic region," which was apparently sometimes used by sex workers who had shaved their pubic hair—presumably as a method of eliminating lice (*OED* "merkin, n.1").

[147] Thomas Blount's *Glossographia* defines "Gonorrhea" as "a disease called the running of the Reines; the flux of natural seed of man or woman unwittingly." Though frequently used to describe gonorrhea in the later seventeenth-century, "flux" had referred to any general flowing—e.g. menstruation and diarrhea—since at least 1377, according to the *OED*. Though syphilis and gonorrhea are often conflated in early modern texts, the word "flux" seems to have been reserved for describing the symptoms of gonorrhea specifically.

son “has a Clap” (B7.38) which his daughter has also apparently caught from her brother. The remedy, for Flux, is clear: “Fuck women & lett Bugg’ry be no more” (B7.44). Bolloxinian cannot “leave [his] old beloved sin” (B7.49), though, and so declares that he will “Reigne & bugg[e]r still!” (B7.56). In response, “the Clowds break open” and “Fiery Demons appear in ye air,” foretelling of the doom of Sodom. Cuntagratia’s ghost even comes back to curse her husband’s folly, and “dreadfull shreiks [*sic*] & groanes are heard & horrid appariconsseen” as, quite literally, all hell breaks loose around Sodom. Bolloxinian quickly grabs his favorite boy-toy, Pockennello, and whisks him away to a cave where, he claims, he “will Expire” on Pockennello’s “Bugger’d A[r]se” (B7.85). The world then crumbles as the stage erupts in “Fire & Brimstone,” and “A Cloud of smoak arises” as the curtain falls and the play ends. Racism and misogyny aside, it’s a real hoot!

Given that *Sodom* presents so much sex to be interpreted, it is odd that it has received so little critical attention from historians and critics of sexuality, even among those interested in Restoration pornography, and specifically sodomy.[148] In many ways, *Sodom* is an extension of the pornographic tradition I analyzed in the previous chapter, the *terminus ad quem* of a literary history inaugurated by Pietro Aretino. But unlike the other texts I have discussed, *Sodom*’s focus on male-male sexual practice shifts the terms of sexual-logistics from vaginal penetration to anal penetration. That those terms are posed in comparison to one another suggests not that they were necessarily interchangeable forms of sexual practice—a point that bears emphasis, since early modern men’s attraction to boys and women has, since the 1980s, often been read in such

[148] *Sodom* has received some critical attention for its political satire (see Elias). More recently, Leah Benedict has explored impotency in the play, though she approaches the sexual from the macro point of view of science and philosophy. Weber’s work on “the royal phallus” in *Sodom* was perhaps the most thorough engagement with sexuality in the play prior to Webster, whose work I discuss at length below.

terms.[149] Rather, what is crucial here is that the knowledge relations entailed in each of them were conceptually analogous: one might, for instance, learn some things about how to have anal sex by learning some things about how to have vaginal sex.

The play takes up male-male sex from its beginning. The prologue, which occurs only in *PrA,* narrates Bolloxinian's decision to shun vaginal sex with women in favor of anal sex, his move "From humid C[un]t to humaine Arse all fire" (A0.25). Bolloxinian has grown "Tyr'd" with the "tedious toyle" required by "Almighty Cunts," and so "From thence to Arse hee hath his Pricke conueyed" (A0.1-3). Vaginal sex is tiresome for him, he says, because women are so lustful. "The sensuall Creature," he says, "apted for delight / Will spend in dreames & so debauch all night." Overtaken by these nighttime urges, women will apparently masturbate all night long. She "begins with little finger," he says, "thrusts that in / And teaches by Degrees whole hand to sin" (A0.7-8).

Whereas the texts I considered in the first chapter blur the hierarchies of sexual pedagogy by figuring sexual knowledge as a reciprocal exchange between partners, here the woman practices sex and learns how to pleasure herself on her own. Unlike John Cannon learning to masturbate by watching other boys, these women are sexual autodidacts. With one hand, the play lampoons in these lines the longstanding association of sex and pedagogy, since it stuffs the baggy structure of the pedagogical relationship typically reserved for two lovers or for a married woman and a maid into the tiny package of finger and hand. But with the other hand, these lines also point to a very real practice of sexual pedagogy that is elided in many other erotic texts: sex sometimes happens in solitude, with one's own body, and learning of all sorts can occur on

[149] See, for instance, Orgel and Jardine.

own's one.[150]

While Bolloxinian spews misogynist slander in these lines he also records a pleasurable form of female self-discovery. His portrayal of female masturbation emphasizes the *time* this practice takes: first one "begins with [the] little finger," and then as one gains a sexual-logistical knowledge of the vagina with the finger, one graduates little-by-little—"by Degrees"—to the "whole hand." Even in texts, like Carew's "A Rapture," that describe sex in slow motion, it is difficult to see the temporally elongated process of acquiring sexual-logistical knowledge. But here, in these two short lines, sexual-logistical knowledge is neither self-evident nor transferred instantaneously. This woman—in fact, since Bolloxinian's critique is of women generally, this every-woman—explores her own body to come to a knowledge of herself; she begins tentatively not only with a single finger, but with "little finger," searching about before she moves on to the next level of auto-penetration. That this process takes time—that it moves "by Degrees"—suggests that the acquisition and application of sexual-logistical knowledge was an ongoing process, one which stretched out not only across the timespan of any particular act, but also across the larger sex life of the individual. This process also moves, however minutely, across degrees of space, from the clitoris to the vagina. It also suggests that the body might itself be a sexual pedagogue. When placed next to *Sodom*, what seemed in Carew to be a quick act of penis-guiding becomes a longer process of sexual habit, practice, and the development of sexual-logistical knowledge.

For Bolloxinian, the sexual-logistical knowledge that women develop as they masturbate corrupts them, sucking "the trickling nature from each vaine" and "turns all ouer Proselite to Fucke" (A0.9-10). Masturbation, that is, converts women to the church of sex where, just a few

[150] See Laqueur, *Solitary Sex*.

lines later, “Some Gawdy Foppe” will “begin[] his miseries” after he is tricked by “the Magick of her ropy thighes” (A0.13-15). As far as Bolloxinian is concerned, these women have given up their virginity to their own little fingers, and thus are lying when “on examinacon” they “swear [they are] the onely maid within ye nation” (A0.11-12). The rest of the prologue is dedicated to explaining how these women, having snared a “Gawdy Foppe,” can convince him that she is still a virgin, principally by making sex *more difficult*. Some women, he claims, wash themselves in a solution of alum, a type of salt. “Cunt washt with Allom,” he says, “makes a whore a maid” (A0.19). Though it is unclear exactly how “Allom” could trick a man into believing that a woman was a virgin, presumably the salinity of an alum solution would have served to diminish vaginal lubrication, thus mimicking the difficulty of penetration narrated in *The School of Venus* where Frank tells Katy that when a man tries to penetrate a virgin “it costs him some pains to thrust it in, if the Wench be straight,” that is, if she really is a virgin.[151] These lines from *Sodom* and *The School of Venus* seem to indicate that men were led to expect virgins not necessarily to have “intact” hymens—given the medical uncertainty surrounding the status of the hymen, being unable to locate a hymen is no sure guide to loss of virginity—but, more broadly, to be difficult to penetrate.[152]

According to Bolloxinian, if a woman doesn't have any “Allom” on hand,“shee clings her thighs so fast, / Haueing spent thrice shee letts him in at last” (A0.20-21). It's unclear whether the man or the woman is the one who has “spent thrice” before the man finally enters her vagina, but in either case these lines about tightly clinging thighs suggest that men, especially men who are sexually inexperienced—what Bolloxinian refers to as an “vnacquainted Chicke” (A0.22)—can

[151] Mudge, 11.
[152] For more on medical debates about the hymen, see Traub’s discussion in *The Renaissance of Lesbianism*, p. 382n70, and Ferguson. For a queer theoretical approach to virginity, see Jankowski.

not tell the difference between intercrural and vaginal intercourse.[153] Like the penis-guiders of other texts, Bolloxinian's woman possesses a sexual-logistical knowledge, and she uses this to control the sexual situation. She is the one, after all, who "letts" the man "in." And the tricks Bolloxinian ascribes to women trying to convince men of their virginity are not contained to *Sodom*. Several decades before *Sodom* appears, Thomas Middleton's *A Mad World My Masters* (1608) portrays a courtesan's mother planning to resell her daughter's virginity, claiming that her mark won't be able to tell the difference anyway, since whatever resistance he might find would itself be convincing enough of her virginity: "There's maidenhead enough for old Sir Bounteous still" (1.1.147).[154]

On the whole, *Sodom* is obsessed not merely with sex, or even with anal sex, but with the pleasure involved in the penetration of tight orifices. Late in the play, Bolloxinian, once again railing against sex with women, declares: "Since I haue buggerd humane arse, I find / Pintle to Cunt is not soe much inclind" (B5.1-2). This is so because:

> By oft fomenting, Cunt so big does swell
> That Pintle works like Clapper in a Bell,
> All Vacuum, no grasping Flesh does glide
> Or hug the brawny muscles of his side,
> Tickling the nerues, prepuce & glance,
> Which all mankind wth such delights intrance. (B5.9-14)

This passage is a striking mixture of a medical knowledge of the physiology of sexual pleasure—the tickled nerves of the prepuce (i.e. foreskin) and glans at the head of the penis—and a bawdy misogyny that laments that the elasticity of an experienced woman's vagina makes sex with her seem like ringing a "Clapper in a Bell." The women of *Sodom* get the opportunity, though, to

[153] On intercrural intercourse, see Fisher, "Wantoning."
[154] Quotes from Middleton's play come from the Oxford edition edited by Michael Taylor and Michael Cordner (1995).

transgressively reinscribe this logic.[155] Later in the play, they complain to Virtuoso, the court's in-house dildo-maker, that his new dildos "are not worth a fart" since their "muzzle [presumably the head of the dildo] is too small" and they are not "long enough" (B6.1-3). Officina, the queen's chief lady in waiting, scolds Virtuoso for the inadequacy of his dildos: "O Fie," she says, "they scarce exceed a Virgins span. / Art should excell w[ha]t nature gaue to man" (B6.11-12). Fuckadilla, another lady-in-waiting, concludes that the dildos are lacking because Virtuoso "has made it by the measure of his owne" penis (B6.14). Virtuoso not only admits that this is indeed the case, but also that "The Copy does exceed the orriginall" (B6.16). Officina then demands that Virtuoso drop his pants and prove it and, when he does, declares that he has a "lovely yard" (B6.27). Indeed, it seems that, despite his claims to the contrary, Virtuoso's penis far exceeds the quality and size of the dildos he has made, as Officina declares that: "Tho you worke merkins & make Dildoes well, / You have the finest yard that e're I saw" (B6.39-40). Each of the ladies fights over who shall get to test out Virtuoso's penis first, but unfortunately all this attention on his "lovely yard" quickly causes Virtuoso to orgasm: "My power long since was in that puddle drownd," he says, "Loe and behold my seed lyes on ye ground" (B6.57-58). At this disappointment, Officina laments that "the world for tarses may well make such moane / Since ye Prick maker cannot rule his owne" (B6.69-70).

This scene, with its emphasis on large penises and the sexual inadequacies of men, allows the women to counter Bolloxinian's logic: if his "Pintle works like Clapper in a Bell," perhaps it is not because of the woman's large vagina, but because of the man's small penis. And even if Bolloxinian's penis *were* as large and "lovely" as Virtuoso's, that would be no guarantee that he would be able to satisfy a woman sexually. There are at least two things worth highlighting in the

[155] On "transgressive reinscription," see Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*.

logic of this scene. First, no matter the gender of the characters, the play consistently represents sexual pleasure as the product of penetration via instruments that are sized appropriately in order to create friction. And, second, even if he seems to have short-changed his own model, Virtuoso relies on the sexual-logistical knowledge that he possesses in order to make his dildos. He relies, that is, on his own body and sexual experience.

Though it would be spurious to assume that all dildo makers in early modern Europe were men, this episode shifts the terms of the knowledge relations involved in prosthetic sex. In Nashe's "Choise of Valentines," for instance, Francis's choice to turn away from Tomalin's inadequate sexual expertise was not ultimately a choice to turn solely toward her *own* sexual-logistical knowledge. Like Virtuoso's dildos, the dildo Francis takes up as her toy carries with it the traces of someone else's sexual-logistical knowledge. This sexual-logistical knowledge is not necessarily, or even likely, a male sexual-logistical knowledge, but it does cite some other knowledge that makes Francis's knowledge, and experience, possible.[156] This is not to say in the least that sex with a dildo is a performance of sex with a man, a claim that lesbian couples in the twentieth-century, and especially butch-femme couples, have had to consistently rebut. It is to say, though, that the sexual pedagogical relationship is rarely reducible to a model of knowledgeable teacher and ignorant student, and further, that sexual-logistical knowledge lies in unexpected places.[157]

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[156] In contemporary American sexual education, teachers will sometimes attempt to scare their students with horror stories of sexually transmitted infections. At least in my experience, a common refrain in much sex-negative pedagogy, is "When you sleep with someone, you're sleeping with everyone they've ever slept with." As an epidemiological statement, this is dubious. But one thing the imprint of past sexual-logistical knowledges in dildos suggests is that this might be a useful sex-positive rubric for understanding the accumulation and dissemination of sexual-logistical knowledge across a lifetime.

[157] For instance, in her discussion of the production of the silicone dildos sold by feminist sex shops in the 1970s, Gayle Rubin notes that these dildos,which "quickly became the favorites among aficionados and standard equipment for lesbians who were interested in penetration" were the products not of the lesbians, straight women, and gay men who were their primary users, but of "a straight black male paraplegic [unnamed in the essay] . . . . who wanted to have a sexual relationship with his wife and who did not like the commercially available prosthetic penises" (372).

One of the unexpected sites of sexual-logistical knowledge that the play stages is the incestuous relationship between the young princess Swivia and the even younger prince Prickett.[158] The pedagogical scene between the siblings begins with a "I'll show you mine if you show me yours" exchange of genital display. Swivia, who says she has not seen Prickett's "Prick" since he was nine, asks him to pull it out of his pants so she can "see how much itts growne" (B3.5). When he does, she declares it "a neat one" and tells him: "Now we are all alone / Ile shut the dore & you shall see my thing" (B3.6-7). Though scholars often point to that early modern pun for the vagina, "nothing," here Swivia firmly declares that her vagina is indeed a "thing."[159] Prickett is taken aback by the site of this thing, declaring that it is "the strangest Creat[ure] that [he] euer saw" (B3.11); but Swivia insists that "tis a harmeless thing" and that if Prickett were only to "Draw near & try" he would "desire noe other death to dy" (B3.19-20). Her speech and her exposed body stir up Prickett's desire. Swivia assures him that she "cann allay the fire" (B3.28). "Come, litle Rogue," she says, "& on my body lye— / A little lower yett—now Dearest, try!" (B3.29-30) This is a variant on penis-guiding, and another indication as to why penises need guiding: Prickett, a virgin, doesn't know exactly where Swivia's vagina is. Lying on top of her, he has trouble getting his penis into her, so she has to direct to him to move "a little lower." "I am a stranger to these vnknowne parts," Prickett says, "and neuer verst in loues obliging arts. / Pray Guide me—I was nere this way before!" (B3.31-33) Here, sexual practice takes practice: Prickett has never done this before, and he needs to learn how.

This serves as a reminder, she says, "that social life is infinitely complex, and that the social histories of sexual change are often full of surprising connections" (373).

[158] Incestuous sibling relationships were not novel in English literature. For instance, John Ford's 1633 stageplay *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* takes up a similarly incestuous relationship between Giovanni and his sister Annabella. *Sodom*'s incest is unique, though, in its detailed portrayal of sexual pedagogy.

[159] In *The Renaissance of Lesbianism,* Traub reads a similar statement in a bawdy English song from the early seventeenth century, "My Thing is My Own," as an example of "women taking pleasure, literally, into their own hands" (103).

And to learn how, he specifically asks for Swivia to "guide" him, as so many other men in texts from across western Europe have asked. What Prickett wants is to be "verst in loues obliging arts," to have a sexual-logistical knowledge that would be "obliging" in the sense both of a relational "binding," as Randle Cotgrave's 1611 *A Dictionary of the French and English Tongues* defines it, and of "aptness to comply," as Elisha Cole's 1676 *An English Dictionary* defines it. Love's arts, for Prickett, are sexual-logistical knowledges that assist in penetrative acts. And since Prickett doesn't yet possess these knowledges, Swivia has to oblige him herself. "There—," she says as she guides his penis in, "Cant you enter now youve found ye dore?" (B3.34). What is most striking about this act of penis-guiding is that it is fully subtextual. It happens, literally, in a dash. "There—Cant you enter now youve found ye dore" represents a sexual action with a punctuation mark and an exphoric gesture ("there") toward some location whose specificity must be supplied by the reader. If the reader is to understand the deictic force of that "there—," they *have* to have some knowledge of penis-guiding. These lines assume a sexual-logistical imagination that is invoked neither by metaphorical description, as in Carew's "A Rapture," nor by visual depiction, as in Raimondi's *I Modi*.

This sexual-logistical imagination is invoked, though, by the ghost of *I Modi* surrounding the play's action. The stage directions describing *Sodom*'s setting consistently surround the action of the play with sexual logistics. The first scene takes place in "an Antichamber hung with Aretines postures"—that is, Raimondi's images which accompany Aretino's *Sonneti*. The second in "a faire Portico Ioyned to a pleasant Garden adorned with many statues of naked men & women in Various postures," and in the middle of that garden is "a naked woman representing a fountain bending and Pissing Bolt vpwards." Scene A3 ups the ante even further when it opens onto a "Bath in which is discouered seuerall men & women naked in various postures of

pleasures" which, after these couples dance about, disappears and reveals once again the first scene's Aretinesque antechamber where the rest of the play—including the pedagogical scene between Swivia and Prickett—unfolds, at least until the final scene which takes place in a "Grove of Cypress Trees . . . cut in the shape of Pricks" where "men are discover'd playing on dulcimers, with their Pricks, and Women with jews Harps in their cunts." Though, as I noted in the last chapter, there has been much debate about whether it is appropriate to consider texts before the late-eighteenth century "pornographic," the fact that *Sodom* seems to call for an audience to literally watch actors having sex on stage "in various postures of pleasures" makes it, to my mind, unequivocally pornographic. Even in the twenty-first century, when a large segment of internet pornography encourages viewers to watch live sex acts via webcam, "pornography" almost never involves watching someone *in the same room* have sex. While many early modern texts may be generically distinct from contemporary pornography in a number of ways, *Sodom* indicates that the pornographic function was alive and well in early modern Europe; even more so, perhaps, than it is today.

Except that none of these scenes were ever actually staged.[160] How could they have been? The court of Charles II may have indeed been filled with libertines, but even they would not go so far as to stage live sex acts as theatre. *Sodom* is closet drama, meant to be read among a circle of intimates rather than staged in a public theater. Even so, the highly visual nature of the mise-en-scène and stage directions is striking.[161] *Sodom* does not stage a room "hunge with Aretine's postures"; it simply cites these images. But this makes their invocation no less powerful. Just as

[160] Love suggests, based only on Pockennello's resemblance to the *commedia dell'arte* character "Pulcinella," that *Sodom* may have been intended as a puppet show. Whether or not this is true, it never was staged as such, as far as I am aware.

[161] Even Milton, whose contemporaneous *Samson Agonistes* might well have included elaborate directions narrating Samson's suicidal-murderous rampage, chooses instead to have the Chorus narrate the action retrospectively.

the penis-guiding embedded in Swivia's dash assumes a sexual-logistical knowledge, the textual invocation of "Aretines postures" with no visual accompaniment assumes a familiarity with its sexual referents, although it does not dictate what those referents need be. Ultimately, it serves only to suggest that *something* sexy is going to happen in these chambers, and that the people who inhabit them engage in sexual imaginings, if not necessarily sexual practice, in their daily lives.

Given that *Sodom* is a satire, parsing out an historical sexual imaginary from a political critique is no easy task. This difficulty has, often silently, plagued scholarship on both the play's authorship and its content; but in large part because it is so intensely sexual, *Sodom*'s content has attracted less scholarship than its bibliographic history. Though traditionally attributed to Rochester, the authorship of the play has long been in question. Stepping back from an investment in determining the authorship of *Sodom*, I briefly turn my attention to the epistemological conditions within which these authorship debates have taken place, and ask: how might the struggle to attribute the play to a particular author be shaped by prior assumptions about what constitutes "deviant sexuality" and about who is allowed to practice this deviant sex?[162]

In 1987, J.W. Johnson published an essay with the helpfully direct title "Did Lord Rochester Write *Sodom*?" He answered this question squarely in the affirmative: "a re-examination of four relevant bodies of evidence—the publication history of the play, the extant manuscript texts, the testimony of Rochester's contemporaries, and internal evidence—demonstrates as fully as it is epistemologically possible that John Wilmot was the writer

[162] I focus on the more recent dispute between Love and Johnson here, but Patrick J. Kearney's *A History of Erotic Literature* also usefully surveys earlier conversation about *Sodom*'s authorship, coming to the conclusion that writers who have "championed Rochester as being responsible for *Sodom*" have done so based "on seemingly emotional rather than bibliographical or textual reasoning" (22).

responsible for *Sodom* as it has come down to us."[163] He goes on to reiterate that "nobody else was as likely to have written *Sodom* as Rochester was."[164] But just a few years later, Harold Love, in a rejoinder entitled "But Did Rochester *Really* Write *Sodom*?," meticulously refutes Johnson's thesis, arguing that Johnson "in fact presents very little new evidence for Rochester's authorship," and significantly misreads the older evidence he does adduce. "What he does," Love says, "is to *assume* that Rochester is the author and then use that assumption as a way of claiming significance for otherwise equivocal data."[165] Indeed, this seems to be exactly what Johnson is doing when he claims that "nobody else was *as likely* to have written *Sodom* as Rochester was."[166] By Johnson's logic, Rochester was a famously obscene poet, and *Sodom* is famously obscene, ergo Rochester must have written *Sodom*.

Resisting this assumption, Love argues that *Sodom* was probably not written by Rochester because in his poetry Rochester "identifies himself exclusively with the active role" in male-male sex, but "*Sodom* challenges this identification by classifying courtiers such as himself as metaphorical pathics."[167] He also claims that "the play's presentation of sex is comic, not erotic."[168] For Love, the key argument against Rochester's authorship is that the play satirizes courtiers like Rochester himself: "could he have read it without realizing that it was an attack on people like himself?"[169] Nevertheless, he includes the play in his edition of Rochester's complete works, in a section entitled "Disputed Works." In his notes on the play in this edition, Love doubles down on his claim that sex in the play is "comic, not erotic" and that this comedy is at

[163] Johnson, 119-120.
[164] ibid., 120.
[165] Love, "But Did Rochester," 324.
[166] Johnson, 120, emphasis mine.
[167] Love, "But Did Rochester," 329.
[168] ibid., 332.
[169] ibid., 333.

the expense of the court. "*Sodom*," he says, "although indisputably indecent, is not in its primary intention a work of pornography, but a *hilarotragoedia* or burlesque. Its author's (or authors') aim was to outdo Buckingham's *The rehearsal* by performing the ultimate inversion of the style and values of Dryden's heroic plays."[170]

From the perspective of a study of sex, what is important about these authorial debates is that both Johnson and Love base their arguments on presumptive sexual knowledge. Rather than the embodied, sexual-logistical knowledge that I have been tracking, Johnson and Love approach *Sodom*'s representations of sex as a form of critical knowledge. Johnson sutures sexual obscenity directly to the figure of "Rochester," thereby rendering what is sexual in the play the perverse and exceptional product of a single mind, rather than of a larger cultural milieu and sexual imaginary. Emphasizing sex as a tool of cultural satire, on the other hand, Love evacuates sex of its content *as* sex. Since he interprets sex as primarily active or passive—and, importantly, less in terms of logistics and positions than in terms of the presumptive social power these positions entail—it is largely immaterial for him that this satire takes the specific form of sexual practice. This focus on an active/passive binary is a product of Love's focus on the text as *primarily* satirical, since satire imagines that a power hierarchy—in the form of, say, a flattened notion of tops and bottoms as active and passive—is the main game in town. Imagining sexual practice is, for Love, not the "primary intention" of the work, but merely one of the side-effects of its investment in imagining and representing power.

Though I strongly disagree with Love's claim that the sex in *Sodom* is not erotic, I find his argument that Rochester did not write the play convincing—not on Love's terms, but because of the salutary effects that the decoupling of the play from the man might have for the history of

[170] Love, *The Works of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*, 496.

sexuality. This decoupling of *Sodom* from the overbearing figure of Rochester as the libertine *par excellence* usefully disperses the play's sexual imagination into a larger cultural milieu. Assigning all the sexual extravagance of the Restoration to Rochester serves to maintain a sterile view of late seventeenth-century English sexual mores because it restricts to a single figure both extravagant sexual practice and the political and religious libertinism that is associated with it. In effect, insisting on Rochester's authorship is a way of saying: "*Sodom*? That bawdy thing? That's just naughty John doing what naughty John does best," and so absolving others of having imagined, had, or wanted the sex that is portrayed in *Sodom*. It is difficult to imagine that anyone, including Rochester, had as much sex as the characters in this play. But the *kinds* of sex they were having? Those, at least, were apparently both legible and, if Rochester did not write the play, producible by more than simply the patron saint of Restoration English libertines.

Beyond these authorship debates, even when *Sodom*'s content has garnered critical attention, it has done so primarily because the play is embedded in libertine culture. In one of the most extensive considerations of the play to date, Jeremy Webster argues that far from espousing a libertine philosophy, *Sodom*'s satire in fact repudiates the libertinism of Charles's court. "By depicting the libertine body as inherently sodomitical," he says, and so "disruptive of the sexual, social, and political order, *Sodom* draws on the libertine's trickster subversiveness to expel the libertine from political influence."[171] He goes on to suggest that, despite itself, this carnivalesque reversal might open up the possibility of valorizing what it seeks to condemn.[172] "The play," he says "runs the risk of eroticizing anal sex."[173] I would invert these terms: it is not that any eroticism attached to anality in this play is a *risky* by-product of satire, but that this satire draws

[171] Webster, 173.
[172] On the carnivalesque in *Sodom*, see Frontain.
[173] Webster, 189.

on—and in fact requires—a knowledge of anal eroticism. If indeed "sodomy in the play is as much a metonymy for libertinism as it is a metaphor for Catholicism," the conceptual ground on which these metaphors are built is a knowledge of sodomitical practice.[174] *Sodom*'s sodomy may be satire, but it is a satire that requires a working conception of how to have anal sex.

Placed in the larger context of western European sex writing that I discussed in the previous chapter, it is unclear which parts of *Sodom* are satirical critiques of courtly libertinism and which are gestures toward actually existing eroticism, since both of these modes of writing—critique and representation—converge around the same historical sexual imagination. Whether any given invocation of sex in the play would have been read as a humorous inversion or as straightforwardly erotic—or both—is, for my purposes, beside the point. The play *demands* a sexual imagination that both requires a prerequisite sexual-logistical knowledge (to understand, say, the penis-guiding in Swivia's allusive "there—") and produces new sexual-logistical knowledge by introducing a vast array of "loues . . . arts" that are, time and again, concerned with the materiality and logistics of penetration, both vaginal and anal.

In the logic of the play as a whole, the materiality and logistics of penetration are primarily matters of lubrication, of turning, in Bolloxinian's words, from "humid Cunt to humaine Arse all fire" (A0.25). The vagina's "humid[ity]" is, presumably, a reference to its self-lubrication, since early modern dictionaries consistently define humid as "wet." But why would the "Arse" be "humaine"? In early modern England, the word "humaine" pointed toward both our contemporary "humane" and "human." To be "humaine," as Edmund Coote's *English School-master* defines it in 1596, is to be "gentle." Two years later John Florio's *Worlde of Words* would define the Italian "humano" as "humaine, gentle, courteous, civil, pleasant, milde,

[174] ibid., 182.

affable." As the *OED* notes under the headword "humane," the word originally meant "civil, courteous, or obliging towards others," recalling Prickett's desire to learn "loues obliging arts" (B3.32) and the obligingness written into the "officious" in Lady Officina's name. But if the "Arse" is so "courteous" and "obliging towards others," why is this courtesy explicitly opposed to the "humidity" of the vagina? Is Bolloxinian really claiming that an unlubricated anus is more sexually welcoming than a lubricated vagina? Paradoxically, it seems, the tighter the orifice, the more obliging it is.

Bolloxinian is not the only early modern character to make this claim. Published just a few decades before *Sodom,* Antonio Rocco's *L'Alcibiade fanciullo a scola,* or *Alcibiades the Schoolboy,* lauds anal sex in much the same terms as Bolloxinian's. Attempting to convince the young Alcibiades of the virtues of male-male anal sex, the elder Philotimus tells him: "So vast is the cunt's capacity it's frightening. It is a labyrinth inviting one to lose oneself in its passages rather than to tarry and take one's pleasure there."[175] The (boy's) anus, on the other hand, has a built-in pedagogical guide:

> Mark, on the contrary, that pretty declivity leading to the flowered garden of a boy. Does it not enclose all the delights? Doesn't the motion of those two fresh, rounded, velvety little cushions gamboling between your thighs incline one to the pitch of wantonness? . . . Doesn't it seem to you that Nature, in giving you these happy, happy cheeks . . . expressly intended to teach us her purpose, which is to fill the concavity of our body when it presses against them?[176]

Philotimus and Bolloxinian articulate here an early version of what has come in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to be a common form of gay male misogyny: "vaginas are gross."

Bolloxinian will take up the issue of lubrication directly later in the play. "Since I haue

[175] Borris, 370. Citations from Rocco come from Kenneth Borris's excerpt in *Same-Sex Desire in the English Renaissance*.
[176] ibid., 370.

buggerd humane arse," he says: "I find / Pintle to Cunt is not soe much inclind. / What tho' the Leachery be dry, tis Smart" (B5.1-5). This characterization of anal sex as "dry" also occurs in Francesco Berni's 1522 "Capitolo delle pesche," which reads, in part:

Tutte le frutte, in tutte le stagioni
come dire mele . . .
pere, susine, ci[l]iegie e poponi,
son bone, a chi le piacen, secche e fresche;
ma, s'i'avessi ad esser giudice io,
le non hanno da far[e] nulla con la pesche.

All the fruits, in all the seasons,
such as apples . . .
pears, plums, cherries and melons,

Are good for those that like them, dried and fresh;
but if I were to be a judge,
they fall short of peaches.[177]

In an essay on bisexual eroticism, Will Fisher identities the associations of these fruits "with eroticized body parts: apples with buttocks, pears with penises, plums with vaginas, cherries with the anus, and melons with the bottom."[178] He goes on to argue that "the line explaining that these fruits could be enjoyed either 'dry or fresh' was meant to be a playful allusion to different types of intercourse: anal (dry) and vaginal (fresh/wet)."[179] But if *all* of the fruits can be enjoyed either dried or fresh, and only one of the fruits—plums—was associated with the vagina, how could it be that all "fresh" sex is vaginal sex? Berni's poem shares the logic of "obliging" that governs Bolloxinian's distinction between a "humid Cunt" and an "Arse" that is consistently figured throughout the play as "humaine" (A0.25). Some vaginal sex is wet, some dry; some anal sex is

[177] This is Laura Giannetti Ruggiero's translation, printed in Fisher, "Peaches and figs," 158.
[178] Fisher, "Peaches and figs," 158. An English ballad entitled "The Hampshire Miller, short and thick / With an Overton Widow he's done the trick" similarly associates plums with vaginas. It reads, in part, "The Miller lov'd her Coney Pye, / To shake her Plum-tree he was not slack / But presently she was on her back."
[179] ibid., 158.

dry, some wet. Both can be, in the logic of this poem, obliging.

Though he does later claim that anal sex is "dry," Bolloxinian distinguishes "Cunt" from "Arse," "humid" from "humaine," by means of a patriarchal logic of the degree of male control over sexual logistics. The women of the prologue who masturbate all night long are dangerous because they take their own virginities and trick unsuspecting and knowledgeable young men into thinking that they are still indeed virgins. Their use of "Allom" and thigh sex to trick these men places their vaginal lubrication—or supposed lack thereof—firmly in *their* control. Sex with them may be, in Berni's terms, "dry or fresh," but it is the woman who decides which it will be. Even though vaginal lubrication is an involuntary physiological process, women, in Bolloxinian's schema, decide who has free access to, and knowledge of, the lubricated vagina. Though virginity is often construed as a mode of male control over women's sexuality, in *Sodom*, virginity marks a woman's relationship to her own body and sexuality. The "humaine Arse" may also be—as, *pace* Fisher, Berni's poem suggests—enjoyed "dry or fresh," but because it produces no lubricant on its own, it is *men* who get to decide which it will be. Together, Berni's suggestion that all of the fruits he lists—only one of which is female-specific—may be enjoyed dry or fresh, and Bolloxinian's suggestion that the anal sex may be "humaine" and obliging suggests that sexual lubricant, whether natural or artificial, was a key component of early modern sexual logistics.

"the most delicate Essence"

Lubricants are mentioned explicitly in several pieces of early modern pornography. In *A Dialogue Between a Married Lady and a Maid* (1740), an English translation of Nicolas Chorier's pornographic prose dialogue *Satyra Sotadica* (1660)—a text so important, James

Grantham Turner has claimed, that "modern sexuality could serve as a footnote" to it[180]—a woman named Octavia recounts to her friend Tullia how her fiancé Philander prepares himself for their second sexual encounter of the day: "having found me so straight [that is, dry] in the Morning, that he not only hurt me, but himself also," she says, "he had furnished himself with a Bottle of the most delicate Essence; with this he rubbed himself, and me, in those Parts, which were to encounter each other."[181] Here the lubricant used is an "Essence," a generic term for a medicinal distillation, or as the "Physical Dictionary" in John Garfield's *A Medical Dispensatory* (1657) puts it: "chymical extracts, being the most refined and spiritual part of any matter or substance." Though this English reference is brief, a 1680 French translation of the *Satyra* entitled *L'Académie des Dames* provides even more detail about the use of lubricant. In this passage, for instance, Octavie relates to her friend Tullie some instructions her mother gave her in preparation for having sex with Pamphile:

> *Octavie.* — I had no sooner entered than I smelled the scent of a certain perfume which was very sweet and very agreeable. "Raise your skirt and shirt up to your belly button," my mother said to me. I immediately obeyed her; as soon as she saw me naked, she smiled: "It must be confessed, Octavie," she told me, "that you are worthy of Pamphile." "In order to save you both a lot of pain," she continued, "you must rub your part with this liquor." As she said this she pulled out a golden vermeil pot filled with the liquor; I put in two fingers and, having pulled them out all covered with this perfume, I took them up as I imagined she meant and greased up all my edges. "You needn't rub your stubble or your pubic mound," she said, "but your insides." She immediately dunked her finger in the pot and anointed me marvelously herself; she penetrated as far as she could. "I was stronger than you when I married your father," she told me, "and even so I would have never been able to bear him if we hadn't made use of this same artifice." I confess, cousin, that this unction had a prodigious effect and surprised me; it caused me

[180] Turner, 167.

[181] Mudge, 250. Though I quote here from the eighteenth-century English translation reprinted in Mudge, Kearney notes that Chorier's *Satyra* "was known in England soon after its first publication," adducing as evidence "a manuscript commonplace book of the 17th century preserved at Princeton University" that "contains a spirited English rendering of Book IV: 'The Duell, Being a translation of one of y^{e} dialogues in Satyra Sotadica De Arcanis amoris et Veneris A^{o} Dom^{ni} 1676" (40). This translation is, he claims, "the earliest surviving specimen of English pornography" (40). Kearney also notes that there is evidence of a "a printed English edition" in "the legal records relating to the prosecution of William Cademan in 1684," which suggests that Chorier circulated in England well before the 1740 translation that survives (40).

such great itching in my part and such a sweet tickle that it put me beside myself; forgetting myself entirely, I almost ran to Pamphile to solicit him to battle.

Tullie. — One almost always makes use of these sorts of unctions, particularly when the girls who marry are young and delicate.

Octavie. — Je n'y fus pas plus tôt entrée que je sentis l'odeur d'un certain parfum qui était fort doux et fort agréable. « Levez votre jupe et votre chemise jusqu'au nombril », me dit ma mère. Je lui obéis aussitôt; d'abord qu'elle me vit nue, elle sourit: «Il faut avouer, Octavie, me dit-elle, que vous êtes digne de Pamphile. Il faut, poursuivit-elle, pour vous épargner à tous deux beaucoup de peine, que vous frottiez votre partie avec cette liqueur. » Elle tira en même temps un vase de vermeil doré qui en était rempli; j'y mis les deux doigts et, les ayant retirés tout embaumés de ce parfum, je les portai à mon invention et en graissai tous les bords. « Ce n'est pas votre poil follet ni votre motte qu'il en faut frotter, c'est le dedans. » Elle trempa aussitôt le doigt dans le pot et me fit elle-même cette merveilleuse onction; elle pénétra le plus avant qu'elle put. « J'étais, me disait-elle, plus forte que vous lorsque je fus mariée a votre père, et avec tout cela je ne l'aurais jamais pu supporter si on ne se fut servi du même artifice. » Je vous avoue, ma cousine, que cette onction fit un effet prodigieux et qui me surprit; elle me causa une si grande démangeaison à la partie et un si doux chatouillement qu'elle me mit hors de moi-même; car peu s'en fallut que, m'oubliant entièrement de ce que j'étais, je ne courusse au devant de Pamphile pour le solliciter au combat.

Tullie. — On se sert presque toujours de ces sortes d'onctions, particulièrement quand les filles qu'on marie sont jeunes et délicates.[182]

Whereas the English text presents a form of sexual forethought on the part of Philander—he *plans* for the sex he will have with Octavia, supplying himself with the "Essence" in order to logistically correct for what had been difficult sex earlier in the day—the French text presents lubrication as a common practice, and as the material manifestation of a sexual-logistical knowledge passed between women. Here, lubrication is so important that Octavie's mother says she would not have been able to have sex with her husband were she not to have used this

[182] Camus, 470-471. All citations of the 1680 *L'Académie des Dames* come from the edition printed in the volume *Oeuvres érotique du XVII^e siècle*, edited by Michel Camus. In *Schooling Sex*, James Grantham Turner claims that the "first and most complete edition" of *L'Académie* is the one printed "A Ville-Franche, chez Michel Blanchet, 1680," currently BL P.C.31.b.30 (Turner 319n31). With his emphasis on originality and fullness, he denigrates the text I cite: "Critics who cite later versions of the *Académie*—fraudulently presented as the original in recent editions by Michel Camus and Jean-Pierre Dubost—generally fail to acknowledge that they are using an abridgement, twice removed from Chorier's text" (320n32). I am less concerned with how faithfully a text represents Chorier's text than with the fact that the text I cite was written and circulated—and therefore imaginable—in early modern France. All translations from the French are my own.

"liquor." And apparently this practice is so common that, as Tullie notes, "One *almost always* makes use of such unctions." A similar scene occurs in the *School of Venus* when Katy recounts to Frank the difficulty Mr. Roger has trying to enter her, and the method he uses to overcome this difficulty: "Mournfully pulling out his Prick before me," she says, "he takes down a little Pot of Pomatum, which stood on the Mantle-tree of the Chimney, oh says he this is for our turn, and taking some of it he rubbed his Prick all over with it, to make it go in the more Glib."[183] Early modern sex, it seems, was supported by material aids—what I call "tools." Not only does lubricant serve as a sexual tool, it also serves as a form of sexual pleasure in and of itself, since it gives Octavie a "sweet tickle."

Lubricant was a key early modern sexual tool, but it was not the only one. Elsewhere in *A Dialogue Between a Married Woman and a Maid*, Octavia recounts how she and Philander stole away from their wedding to have sex in a closet before the ceremony:

> Philander immediately taking me in his Arms, set me upon a Table, before a great Looking-Glass, and taking up my Coats, he set two low Stools under each Foot; then coming between my Legs with his Breeches and Drawers down, and his Thing stiff and red, he was just going to try to enter me, when we heard the Key turn in the Door, and saw my Mother enter the Room.[184]

Here we are able to see Philander's sexual-logistical knowledge, since he has to have some idea of what he means to do when he hoists Octavia onto the table. What's more, he also provides her with step-stools, presumably so that she will be in a slightly higher position that would be more amenable to him trying to penetrate her. Much like lubricant, this table and these stools serve as sexual tools. And the strategic use of household items—tables, stools, "Essence," pomatum—as sexual tools was apparently important enough to the portrayal of sexual logistics that it made it

[183] Mudge, 29.
[184] ibid., 248.

from the French to the English text, despite large swaths of the French text dropping out in translation. In the French text, for instance, almost exactly the same language occurs. Octavie says:

> [After my mother left] we lost no time in setting ourselves to battle, when my mother came back saying that she had forgotten to tell us the most important thing. Pamphile had already sat me on a large bench that was attached to the wall and covered with a carpet; he had made me spread my legs and put my feet on two stools to elevate them.
>
> Nous ne perdîmes point de temps et nous étions déjà disposés au combat, lorsque ma mère rentra en disant qu'elle avait oublié de nous dire le plus nécessaire. Pamphile m'avait déjà fait asseoir sur un banc fort large, qui était attaché à la muraille et couvert d'un tapis; il m'avait fait écarter les jambes et m'avait fait mettre les pieds sur deux escabeaux pour les élever.[185]

In explaining that the stools were meant to "elevate" Octavie's feet, the French text is even more explicit about the logistical use of these sexual tools. Both here and in supplying himself (in the English text) with "Essence" in advance of the sexual encounter, Philander/Pamphile displays sexual forethought. Not only does he know how to position Octavia on a table so that he can get better leverage, he also knows that lubricant will help facilitate vaginal penetration.

Mr. Roger, on the other hand, does not plan ahead; his use of lubricant is improvisatory. Having difficulty penetrating Frank, he searches the room in order to find a sexual aid and sees a "Pot of Pomatum," a type of lip-balm or face cream, on Katy's mantle. Though it is unclear what the intended use of the generic "essence" (or the generic French terms "liqueur" and "parfum") is—perhaps it was made specifically as sexual lubricant?—it is clear that Katy's pomatum was not originally intended for sexual use. Katy had the pomatum on her mantle already, even though this was the first time she had ever had, or planned to have, sex. And pomatum was a fairly

[185] Camus, 463.

common household ointment. Nicholas Culpepper's *The English Physitian* (1652) notes that the "the ointment called Pomatum, if sweet and well made, helpeth the Chops in the Lips or Hands, and maketh smooth and supple the rough Skin of the Hands or Face parched with wind or other accidents."[186] Mr. Roger, leveraging his knowledge of sexual penetration to ingeniously turn this pomatum into an ad hoc lubricant, recognizes that there are more lips than one which it can render "smooth and supple."

These representations of the use of lubricant in early modern pornography demonstrate that sexual-logistical knowledge is constantly under revision, since one difficult sexual encounter ("having found me so straight in the Morning") produces new sexual-logistical arrangements in later encounters. These moments can also highlight the imbrications of sex and medicine in the quotidian life of early moderns. There is an extensive scholarly literature detailing the practices, professions, modes of conceptualization and diagnosis, and treatments of early modern English medicine. One reigning mode of medical conceptualization in early modernity was Galenic humoralism, a system of thought that imagined the body to be a balance of wet and dry, cold and hot, and governed by relative levels of blood, phlegm, and yellow and black biles. In part due to the pioneering work of Gail Kern Paster and Michael Schoenfeldt, and in part because of frequent references to humoralism in early modern drama—Jonson writes, for instance, two humorally-inspired plays, *Every Man In His Humour* (1598) and *Every Man Out of His Humour* (1599)—literary scholars have taken up humoralism as one of the primary ways of understanding medicine in early modernity.[187]

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[186] Culpepper, 5.

[187] See Paster, *Humouring the Body* and *The Body Embarrassed*; and Schoenfeldt. For a treatment of an even more complex notion of *geo*humoralism that extends beyond medical imaginaries and into constructions of race and ethnicity, see Floyd-Wilson.

Given that the category "woman" was, in part, defined by the humoral conjunction of a presumed wetness and coldness, it would be easy to read lubricant as a response to a humoral deficiency, a salve for an insufficiently wet woman. And yet, the language that these texts use to describe lubricant seems to resist such a reading. Mr. Roger, after all, imagines lubricant not as humorally restorative, but as logistically instrumental, since he "rubbed himself, and [Katy], in those Parts, which were to encounter each other." A humoral economy is ultimately a regime of the restoration and maintenance of homeostasis. If lubricant were a humoral remedy, one might expect him to imagine it as a supplement to be internalized, something Katy should ingest in order to restore her "natural" balance of humors. But lubricant does not restore, it replaces. It does not inculcate wetness; it stands in for it. It is medical, insofar as it is imbricated in a medical economy—"essence" and "pomatum" would have been made and sold by apothecaries, or created at home, sometimes based on apothecaries' recipes—but it is not a medicine; it is a tool used for tactical purposes. There is nothing to indicate that Katy or Octavia are seen as humorally deficient and in need of restoration. In fact, given the widely circulating language of "dry" and "wet" and the emphasis on sexual-logistical difficulties with new partners that I have tracked, it is likely that Katy and Octavia were *expected* to be, at least somewhat, dry. As Tullie remarks in *L'Académie des Dames*, for instance, the use of lubricant was most frequent "when the girls who marry are young and delicate." What's more, there is nothing to suggest that the use of lubricant in any particular tryst would affect the woman's wetness or dryness in future trysts. Lubricant, like the use of a stool or a chair, is a sexually contingent tool, not an internalized cure.

Lubricant's resistance to a humoral reading suggests two things: (1) that a medical reading of an early modern literary text that prioritizes humoral logics is likely to miss, or

misunderstand, the presence and use of lubricant; and (2) that multiple, somewhat incommensurable regimes of medical conceptualization existed in the quotidian lives of early moderns. Sometimes an ailment might present itself as primarily internal and humoral, but sometimes it might present itself as external and instrumental. Whether one or the other conceptualization would present itself as the overriding mode of understanding in any given situation would depend on a variety of factors, including and especially the person's familiarity with abstracted medical *theories*.[188] Lubricant existed within a medical economy, but it did so as a form of what Mary Fissell has called "vernacular epistemology."[189] Knowledge of lubrication did not entail any particular theory about human embodiment, other than a sense-knowledge of the mutual friction involved in penetration.

Paying the Apothecary

These two premises help explain particular representations of sexual practice that occur in early modern city comedy. In John Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605), for instance, the bawd Mary Faugh reminds the titular courtesan, Franceschina, that her livelihood depends on Faugh's care practices. Among the litany of services Faugh provides to Franceschina, including mending her clothes and finding her high-quality clients, the first service she mentions—the one that comes most readily to mind—is her medical care. "Who paid the apothecary?" Faugh asks.[190] Because it is not elaborated on in any of the surrounding lines, this line seems to be an index of a practice so common, so quotidian, that an early modern audience would have

[188] I am not, of course, the first person to push back against the ubiquitousness of humoralism. See, for instance, Sullivan, Strier, and Tilmouth.
[189] Fissell, "Hairy Women," 46.
[190] Marston, 2.2.27.

understood it readily. But to modern ears, it is not clear at all what exactly Mary Faugh is paying the apothecary *for*. David Crane's 2007 New Mermaids edition of the play provides no gloss on this line. Given a (possible) reference to syphilis earlier in the play, some readers might implicitly gloss this as a reference to sexual disease. But in the context of the references to lubrication in prose pornography, the provision of some sort of lubricant might be just as likely.

Indeed, placing *The Dutch Courtesan* in the context of the extra-humoral medical economy of lubrication not only illuminates a potential quotidian sexual-logistical knowledge that this play imagines, but also reorients the ways in which scholarly apparatuses—like Crane's lack of a gloss, or a solely humoral conceptualization of medicine—have shaped our ability to understand sexual knowledge in these texts. Crane's edition of the play, for instance, subtly but consistently portrays sex in the play as *disease*. In the play's opening scene, Freevill, a frequent client of the titular character, describes the courtesan's profession to his supposedly pious, melancholic friend, Malheureux: "They are no ingrateful persons; they will give *quid* for *quo*: do ye protest, they'll swear; do you rise, they'll fall; do you fall, they'll rise; do you give them the French crown, they'll give you the French—*O iustus iusta iustum!*"[191] Tit for tat, rising and falling, erection and orgasm: these jokes perform a relatively seamless relation to sex acts, and to sexual knowledge. "Rising" isn't very funny, after all, unless you are familiar with the concept of an erection or, more subversively in the supposedly vanilla world of sanctioned early modern (hetero)sexuality, the concept of woman-on-top intercourse that the "do you fall, they'll rise" cites.

But the climax of Freevill's joke takes its energy from an ignorance relation: they'll give you the French . . . what? What exactly is in that dash? Crane's edition seems to find nothing

[191] Marston, 1.1.120-124. "*O iustus iusta iustum*" translates to something like: "O just! proper! perfect!"

ambiguous whatsoever about Freevill's dash, since it sutures the courtesan tightly to disease, glossing this passage as "in return for the coin of payment (and 'the French crown' was also a slang term for the baldness brought on by syphilis) they will give you the French pox."[192] Crane is not wrong to suggest that syphilis ghosts this joke—"the French pox" had been in use in English since at least 1503, according to the *OED*. But why assume that syphilis is the just or proper outcome of sex with a courtesan? Crane's disease-ridden reading of this passage is partially authorized by Freevill's previous claim: "But employ your money upon women, and, a thousand to nothing, some one of them will bestow that on you which shall stick by you as long as you live."[193] Nonetheless, there is something oddly circular about Crane's gloss: if *you* give *them* "the baldness brought on by syphilis" then *they'll* give *you* . . . the syphilis you gave to them? *Quid* for *quo*, indeed. In the context of a monologue in which Freevill is—albeit somewhat wryly—attempting to persuade the pious Malheureux of the virtues of visiting sex workers, it seems especially odd that he would, at the height of his argument, suddenly contradict himself and equate the sexual transmission of disease with "justice." Indeed, what is most significant about this passage is the titillating openness of the dash, its performance of a sexual unknown that bursts into a macaronic euphoria—not merely "*O iustus*" but the complete dictionary entry for the word, including each of its possible masculine, feminine, and neuter forms, which Crane suggests in his gloss is "for emphasis."[194]

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[192] ibid., p. 13.

[193] Marston, 1.1.118-120. For a more detailed discussion of the manifestation of contemporary politics in editorial glosses, see Marcus; Masten; and Traub, *Thinking Sex*.

[194] Marston, p. 13. It may seem a bit suspect to put so much emphasis on the epistemological import of a piece of punctuation, especially given the oft-recited irregularity of early modern printing practices. But Freevill is not the only early modern who uses the dash to express the limits of knowability. Beyond *Sodom*'s penis-guiding discussed above, there is also, for example, the end of George Herbert's "Thanksgiving," a poem whose beauty is fundamentally a product of its epistemological humility, and whose recognition of its own unknowingness is figured in its dashes: "Then for thy passion—I will do for that—/Alas, my God, I know not what." For more on the dash, see Maguire, pp. 531-537.

This is an emphasis, though, of precisely nothing in particular. It is an emphasis of the idea of an unspecified, but cathected, sexual knowledge relation—a knowledge relation that is in fact an ignorance relation. What authorizes "pox" to be *the* meaning of the dash, to be *the* gloss, is the circular, misogynist logic that governs the sign of "the whore," both in early modern England and in twenty-first century Western culture.[195] Even when the john is the one bringing in "the French crown," it is the whore who is abjectly and metonymically equated with disease. Why is it so easy to replace the dash with "pox"? Because whores, the logic goes, *are* disease. But this is Malheureux's logic, not Freevill's. Malheureux is the one who inveighs against exposing to whores "*your health and strength and name*,"

> Your precious time, and with that time the hope
> Of due preferment, advantageous means
> Of any worthy end, to the *stale use,*
> *The common bosom*, of a money-creature,
> One that sells human flesh, a mangonist.[196]

It seems odd to suggest that Freevill, explicitly arguing against this aversion, would come around to agreeing with it in the end. No doubt, the life of a sex worker in early modern England was, as it is now, a dangerous one, and one particularly susceptible to disease. What's more, the scholarly work demonstrating the consistent early modern linkage between disease and (female) sexuality was a major feminist achievement.[197] But this danger is hardly all there was to the life of a prostitute, and the editorial gloss, as a genre, bears the weight of exposing early modern cultural logics without, one hopes, necessarily reproducing them. The truth of a proposition is no balm against the misogyny of its insistence.

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[195] For more on the cultural logic of "the whore," see Spiess.
[196] Marston, 1.1.92-97 emphasis mine.
[197] See, for instance, Traub's chapter on *Troilus and Cressida* in *Desire & Anxiety*, and Karras.

Reading Mary Faugh's reference to "pay[ing] the apothecary" later in the play as a reference to the use of lubricant—a sexual-logistical economy that lies athwart the medical economy of disease—can help recast our understanding of sex in the play, both in relation to disease, and as a whole. Sex may indeed be attached discursively to disease; but represented as a practice, it is more often attached to pleasure. Indeed, this passage is largely concerned with pleasure: with erection, titillation, orgasm, sexual agency, and play. The assumption, then, that it should end is disease seems suspect. Instead, I propose that the dash and its emphatic Latin conclusion extend the logic of the passage and indicate a pleasure beyond (English) words, a pleasure just beyond the bounds of explanation. On this view, the proper reward for payment for sex might be *orgasm*—that open "*O*"—and, in the context of Freevill's "*quid* for *quo*," a mutual orgasm at that. If one is primed to imagine that sex workers are agents of contagion, then it is an easy step to imagining the life-long effects of a disease that was then largely untreatable. Harder to hear given the misogynist logic governing "the whore" is Freevill's other suggestion that these women might just offer Malheureux a sexual experience so intensely pleasurable—*O justus, justa, justum!*—that it will "stick by" him "as long as" he "lives." Sometimes, after all, sex is worth remembering.

Marston's reference to apothecaries, and to pleasure, in relation to whoredom is not isolated. In Dekker and Middleton's *The Roaring Girl,* Laxton says of Mrs. Gallipot that she is a "Good wench, i'faith, and one that loves darkness well; she puts out a candle with the best tricks of any drugster's wife in England."[198] In her Norton Critical edition of the play, Jennifer Panek does not gloss this line; in her edition for the Oxford *Collected Thomas Middleton*, Coppélia Kahn merely indicates that a "drugster" is an "apothecary." But why is it specifically

[198] Dekker and Middleton, 2.1.122-125.

apothecaries' wives who have "tricks" to "put out a candle"? What is so bawdy and illicit—the "darkness" here refers simultaneously to sex and to stealing money—about an apothecary's wife? In these lines the association of apothecaries with lubricant extends to their wives, binding up whole networks of people into (potentially illicit) sexual logistics. It is not that a particular meaning or value judgment is attached to the figure of the "drugster's wife." Nor do I wish to claim that these lines serve as evidence of the historical sexual practices of apothecaries' wives—as, for instance, I did claim in the last chapter about the reproduction of Thomas Carew's "A Rapture" in *Aristotle's Masterpiece*. Instead, the presence of these lines in Dekker and Middleton's and Marston's plays, indicate that apothecaries were a part of an early modern audience's sexual-logistical field, one that extends beyond the strictly sexual into the daily practice of being in the world—including the quotidian practice of shopping. Apothecaries and their wives were people one consulted and paid, not to make sex *mean*, but to make sex *happen*, whether through lubrication or through prostitution.

Discussions of sexual lubrication were not unique to city comedy and prose pornography. Take, for instance, Richard Eden's translation of Pietro Martire d'Anghiera's *Decades of the Newe Worlde or West India* (1555), an account of early-sixteenth century Spanish encounters with indigenous Caribbeans which describes "the manners and customs of the Indians of the firm land, and of their women."[199] Amidst his pronouncements about indigenous sexual and marital habits, d'Anghiera records a form of quotidian sexual logistics by noting the difficulties that Spanish men encounter in having sex with Caribbean women who have recently aborted pregnancies. Caribbean women, he says, after having induced a miscarriage by ingesting an unspecified herb, "go to the river and wash" themselves. "And when after this," he continues,

[199] Loomba and Burton, 85.

"they have a few days abstained from the company of men, they become so straight, as they say which have had carnal familiarity with them, that such as use them cannot without much difficulty satisfy their appetite."[200] Though no dictionary I have seen, either early modern or modern, includes this sense of the word "straight," it seems clear from the context—and from almost identical usages in both the 1680 English translation of *The School of Venus* ("it costs him some pains to thrust it in, if the Wench be straight")[201] and the 1740 English translation of Nicolas Chorier's *Satyra Sotadica* ("having found me so straight in the Morning, that he not only hurt me, but himself also")[202]—that the word "straight" in this passage means that these specific women's vaginas were insufficiently lubricated.

I turn to d'Anghiera's account because it allows us to see a consideration of sexual logistics and lubrication in a (supposedly) nonfictional genre, thereby suturing some of the fictional representations I have been discussing more closely to an historical reality. But I also turn to d'Anghiera's account because it allows us to see how racial difference is mediated through sexual practice. Elsewhere in his narrative, d'Anghiera makes recognizably racist pronouncements about the fundamental differences from Europeans of the Caribbeans he describes. For instance, he writes that "the principal men bear their privities in a hollow pipe of gold: but the common sort have them enclosed in shells of certain great whelks, and are beside utterly naked." These indigenous men dress this way, he claims, "for they think it no more shame to have their cod seen than any other part of their bodies," adding that "in many provinces both the men and women go utterly naked without any such coverture at all."[203]

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[200] ibid., 85.
[201] Mudge, 11.
[202] ibid., 250.
[203] Loomba and Burton, 85.

Here, the spectacle of racial difference takes the form of a broad pronouncement on not only the performances of gender and sexuality that d'Anghiera claims to have witnessed in these indigenous people's nakedness, but also on the cultural habits of thought that supposedly undergird them. It is not merely that indigenous Caribbeans dress differently than Europeans, but that they dress differently because of a particular way in which "they think." And since d'Anghiera groups within this "they" various people which he is otherwise careful to demarcate—both the "principal men" and "the common sort;" both "men and women"—it is clear that this ethnographic pronouncement serves to unite this otherwise disparate groups into a racial category.

This move to the theorization of the "they" and their difference is not merely a racializing gesture, but a *racist* one, since it is invested in the "production and exploitation of group-differentiat[ion]" that Ruth Wilson Gilmore argues is the constitutive function of racism.[204] What's more, at least in the case of d'Anghiera, the group-differentiation of this spectacular racism is also fundamentally invested in producing the "vulnerability to premature death" that Gilmore marks as racism's telos. This vulnerability emerges most clearly in d'Anghiera in moments where he offers physiological descriptions of indigenous Caribbeans in order to script the logistics of violence onto the bodies of people of color. For instance, he claims that indigenous Caribbeans "have the bones of the skulls of their heads four times thick and much stronger than ours. So that in coming to hand strokes with them, it shall be requisite not to strike them on the heads with swords. For so many swords have been broken on their heads with little hurt done."[205] Where the stakes of this ethnographic spectacle are, for the Europeans, the

[204] "Racism," Gilmore argues, "is the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death" (28).
[205] Loomba and Burton, 85-86.

maintenance of the physical integrity of their weapons, the stakes for the indigenous people d'Anghiera describes are life and death.

But his description of the logistical difficulties that the European men have when they have sex with the "straight" Caribbean women is different. It is not a broad pronouncement about the way "they," those *other* people, "think." Nor is it even a description of supposedly fundamental physiological differences. Instead, when d'Anghiera describes the logistical difficulties caused by these women's unlubricated vaginas, he describes a sexual knowledge that the European men have gained about specific women in specific circumstances—women who have recently had medicinally-induced abortions. It is those *specific* women, he writes, who "become so straight, as they say which have had carnal familiarity with them, that such as use them cannot without much difficulty satisfy their appetite." His ascription of this sexual knowledge to those "which have had carnal familiarity with them" is one of the key epistemological differences between the broad racist pronouncements he has just made, and this more specific interweaving of sexual logistics and racial difference. Where his other pronouncements were couched in terms of racial ontology—those people *are* this way, or they *think* in this way—d'Anghiera's attention to these "straight" women is far more interested in the phenomenology of interracial sex. In this instance, it is not that the Europeans use a sexual discourse to shore up a racial distinction, but that they produce a racial distinction through sexual practice—a practice visible only when seen in the context of a larger historical concern with "straight" sex (that is, unlubricated sex) and the lubricants that can ease its way.

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As should be clear from the various paths I have traveled in this chapter, tracing the material conditions of sexual practice can lead scholars to reconsider a variety of other practices

and areas of scholarly interest—the historical experience of the medical economy, say, or the production of racial difference in the colonial contact zone. It can also lead scholars to reconsider the editorial practices through which we frame texts, and thus frame their meanings. In closing, I want to suggest that the analyses I have conducted in this chapter—of sexual knowledge making; of sexual lubricants; of the relative size of genitals and orifices; of the assignation of authorship; of the medical economy of sex; of glossing practices; and of the imbrication of race and sex—have been made possible only by my bracketing of macro-level considerations of discourses. I have been concerned, I hope it is abundantly clear, with "sexuality," "gender," and "race." But I have been concerned with these concepts as they emerge as daily *practices*, rather than as broader *discourses*. While "sodomy" might rise to the level of discourse, for instance, the lubricants early moderns may have used to facilitate anal sex (no matter the gender of the sexual partners) certainly do not. An analysis of any individual lubricant might be considered a micro-level analysis: a specific substance in a specific place at a specific time performing a specific function for specific people. But, as I have been arguing, the *knowledges* that can be seen by tracing these lubricants and their conceptual kin are not quite so micro. Accumulated over time by those who have "carnal familiarity" with themselves and others—across, that is, a *sex life*—these sexual-logistical knowledges ("how do I do this action?") lie at the meso-level of analysis, that middle space that mediates between an individual life and the larger historical discourses that subtend and circumscribe the possibilities of that life.

In this chapter and the previous one, I focused on the logistical aspects of sexual phenomenology. But, as we have begun to see, the tension created by the relationship between these micro-level interactions and the macro-level social conditions of possibility in which they occur emerges phenomenologically not only in various logistical predicaments, but also in

various *affects*. The women of *Sodom*, for instance, are distraught when King Bolloxinian forbids his male subjects from having sex with them. And, as I discussed in the first chapter, *The School of Venus*'s Katy approaches her first sexual encounter with considerable anxiety. How are we to understand this distress and this anxiety? And how did early moderns themselves understand and negotiate the affects—not only distress, but also excitement, anxiety, pleasure, grief, disappointment, exhilaration—that thread their way through quotidian sexual interactions? In order to paint a more complete picture of the sex lives of the early moderns, I now turn my attention to these affective questions.

Part Two: Sexual Affects

Chapter Three

Pedagogical Love:
Affect Theories and Female-Female Erotics on the Elizabethan Stage

"The love which teacheth"

In *As You Like It*, men like to tell men how women like it. We learn, for instance, of Celia's intent to marry Oliver only through the voices of other men; we do not get to "say with her that she loves" Oliver, as Oliver asks Orlando to do, since Celia is silent throughout Act 5 (5.2.8).[206] And even when Rosalind plays Ganymede, he proves his manhood with his knowledge of women's "giddy offenses" (3.2.336-37), a knowledge passed down to him by another man, his fictional "old religious uncle" (3.2.332). Indeed, disseminating the knowledge of how women like it becomes Ganymede's primary narrative purpose once he meets Orlando in the forest. The first time we hear men explain women to other men, though, we hear not about women liking men, but about women liking women. Speaking of Celia and Rosalind, Charles remarks that "never two ladies loved as they do" (1.1.106-7), and Le Beau ups the ante by suggesting that their love might border on the supernatural when he claims that their "loves / are dearer than the natural bond of sisters" (1.2.264-5).[207]

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[206] Unless otherwise noted, all citations of *As You Like It* refer to Juliet Dusinberre's Arden Third Series edition (2006).

[207] Though several scholars—see Traub, *Desire* and *Renaissance*; Tvordi; DiGangi; Jankowski; Crawford; Fisher; and Nardizzi—have followed Charles and Le Beau in finding something "homoerotic" about Celia and Rosalind's relationship, such readings have largely taken a backseat to discussions of the gender-transgressive male-male relations of Orlando and Ganymede, and of the actors—one a man, one a boy—who would have portrayed them. This relegation of female-female relations to secondary critical status follows the more general pattern of lesbian

The play's title seems to demand these pronouncements about the modes and methods of desire, since the phrase "as you like it" shuttles ambivalently between the prescriptive—*how* you like it—and the conditional—*should* you like it.[208] This prescriptive-conditional dialectic, oscillating as it does between indicative pronouncement and subjunctive conjecture about desire, creates a kind of sexual knowledge: the characters (and the spectators watching them) know how "you" like it; then wonder what it might be like if "you" liked it differently. They then know, differently, how "you" like it; then wonder what it might be like, etc. The play's title thus sets up a pedagogical structure, a teacherly ethos that undergirds the play's action. Trying on various possible ways of liking others and then reporting those possibilities to each other, the characters of *As You Like It* consistently find themselves in pedagogical relationships with themselves, with other characters, and with the audience. Where early feminist and queer critics influentially detailed the ways in which cross-dressing—both the boy actors' and Rosalind's—structures the desire lines in the play, Shakespeare's "as" play also dramatizes the pedagogical processes by which its various characters learn to draw and follow those various desire lines.[209] And again and

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inconsequence laid out by Annamarie Jagose: the male-male relationship, hierarchically and sequentially prioritized, blocks our view of the supposedly derivative female-female relationship. In revisiting her earlier work on the play, Valerie Traub claims in *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* that this tendency to prioritize the gender transgressive dyad of Orlando and Ganymede stems from a longstanding patriarchal fantasy of femmes like Celia as "women loving women *to minimal social effect*" (Traub 182, emphasis hers). "If we have not interpreted the language of . . . Celia . . . as homoerotic" it is because, she claims, "the palpable 'femininity' of these characters blinds us—and, I suspect, may have blinded many of their contemporaries as well—to the eroticism evident in their language of desire" (Traub 182). Rosalind, certainly, seems to be blinded in this way. Men get to tell men how women like it, but even when Celia is most explicit about her affections, she is not heard.

[208] Traub has argued that the play's "dependence on the conditional structures the possibility of erotic exploration without necessitating a commitment to it" (*Desire* 128). She thus reads the play for its dramatization of "erotic contingency" (*Desire* 128). To the extent that I am interested in contingency, my interest lies in the affective character of living in the unknown zone of erotic "possibility"—a state of being that can be as titillating as it can be disappointing.

[209] For readings of cross-dressing in the play see, for instance, Rackin, "Androgyny"; Traub, *Desire*; and DiGangi. In the *Renaissance of Lesbianism*, Traub notes that "interest in theatrical transvestism—whether that of the boy actor playing female roles or that of the crossdressed heroine—offered literary critics an initial point of access to the textualization of homoerotic desire" (56). She will go on to argue, however, that "we err when we treat crossdressing, whether literary or social, as the exemplary instance of female homoeroticism in the early modern period" (170).

again, the play underscores that these pedagogical processes are fundamentally *affective*. In *As You Like It*, learning to like is learning to feel.[210]

For instance, when Duke Frederick banishes Rosalind from court, Rosalind insists that her grief is more poignant and pressing than Celia's. Celia disagrees, responding: "Rosalind lacks then the love / Which teacheth thee that thou and I am one" (1.3.93-94). For Celia, the attachment that not only binds but equates her and Rosalind is produced by a pedagogical love, a "love / Which teacheth." The knowledges produced by this pedagogical love are particular affects, since Celia's claim that Rosalind has failed to learn love's lessons is supported by an affective knowledge, by the fact that Rosalind is supposedly "more grieved than" Celia is (1.3.89). Rosalind's affect serves for Celia as evidence that Rosalind is improperly, or insufficiently, attached to her; it thus serves as an impetus for a pedagogical intervention. The command for her to "wrestle with [her] affections" (1.3.20) provides a corrective lesson that, Celia hopes, will align Rosalind's affections for her with her affections for Rosalind. Rosalind need only develop the "love / Which teacheth" in order to bring her affections into harmony with Celia's.

Celia and Rosalind find themselves in this predicament—Celia wanting Rosalind to love her more, or differently, than she does—throughout the play. For example, a scene before she accuses Rosalind of lacking this pedagogical love, Celia offers an origin story for love's pedagogical powers. As Rosalind lies in despair after her father's banishment, Celia begs her

[210] I do not make a distinction between affect, feeling, and emotion, as some other scholars do. This is in part because I agree with Benedict Robinson that "the desire to assert the claims of affect against those of emotion . . . derives some of its energy from the desire to erect a wall of technical language between academic discourse and that kind of unsophisticated, even embarrassing conversation about emotion that no doubt takes place in the everyday life of affect theorists themselves" (110). It is also in part because I am persuaded by his argument that "at their heart, affect and emotion are not different concepts: they are versions of the same break with an earlier theory of the passions as the simultaneously cognitive and embodied responses of a soul" (123).

distraught "sweet" cousin to "be merry" and wishes that she "yet were merrier" (1.2.1-4). Rosalind responds to these requests as if they were lessons that Celia was attempting to teach her: "Unless you could teach me to forget a banished father," she says, "you must not learn me how to remember any extraordinary pleasure" (1.2.5-7). But Rosalind is a resistant student, and her refusal to be taught "how to remember . . . pleasure" proves itself to be a lesson for Celia. "Herein I see," Celia retorts, "thou lov'st me not with the full weight that I love thee" (1.2.8-9), explicitly marking this exchange, in that "see," as one that has taught her something about her relationship with her cousin. This mismatch between the "weight" of Celia's attachment to Rosalind and Rosalind's attachment to her encourages Celia to offer Rosalind a pedagogical counterfactual: "If my uncle, thy banished father, had banished thy uncle, the Duke my father," she asks Rosalind to imagine, "so thou hadst been still with me I could have taught my love to take thy father for mine" (1.2.9-12). Where Rosalind lacks the "love / Which teacheth," Celia's love is one she teaches herself. As is the case in 1.3, Rosalind's affect, her lack of "pleasure" and merriment, serves for Celia as evidence that Rosalind's affections for her are not the same as her affections for Rosalind; it also serves as an impetus for her to change this state of affairs, to bring Rosalind's affections in line with her own. This attempt to get Rosalind to imagine what it would be like to find herself in Celia's position is exemplary of the pedagogical dialectic inscribed in the play's title. "Do not like me *as* you like me now," Celia seems to say to Rosalind. "Like me *as if* you liked me like this."

Because they present themselves as diagnostics of, and prescriptions for, failures of intimacy, these pedagogical interactions between Celia and Rosalind index these characters' larger assumptions about affect and intimacy. Celia cannot "see" that Rosalind does not love her "with the full weight" that she loves Rosalind—she cannot, that is, learn something new about

their relationship—if she does not have some prior understanding of the "weight" of Rosalind's love for her that she could revise, could "see" anew. The language of these interactions requires that the playgoer or reader understand that Rosalind and Celia have larger assumptions about the way their world works, since the action of these scenes is driven by a disagreement about the forms and intensities of the intimacies of these characters. If the audience is to understand Celia and Rosalind's exchange, they must implicitly fill in the text with those prior assumptions.

What the audience supplies to these interactions is not necessarily any particular knowledge of the content of Celia's affections for Rosalind. Instead, the audience imputes to Celia a structure of affection—a set of assumptions that she holds about her relationship with Rosalind that is thrown into relief by the failure of those assumptions to account for Rosalind's grief. This set of assumptions constitutes what the psychologist Silvan Tomkins calls "affect theories." Affect theories are ideas about how affects—e.g. shame, or joy, or, in the case of Rosalind and Celia, pleasure or grief—work that serve as organizing rubrics for our daily lives. As Eve Sedgwick explains it: "by Tomkins's account . . . all people's cognitive/affective lives are organized according to alternative, changing, strategic, and hypothetical affect theories."[211] The intimate conjunction of "affective" and "cognitive" here is not incidental. Affect theories are not only ways of feeling, but also ways of knowing, since they provide conceptual structures for the acquisition and organization of phenomenological knowledges.[212] They are, in effect, concepts for nonconceptual knowledges—frames into which intuitions and perceptions that

[211] Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*, 133. See also Sedgwick and Frank, eds., *Shame and Its Sisters*, for a selection of Tomkins's writings.

[212] See Robinson for a detailed overview of early modern scholastic thought on the conjunction of feeling and thinking. Steven Mullaney makes a similar claim about Raymond Williams's term "structures of feeling." "Structures of feeling," he writes, "are modes of thinking as well as feeling that are inseparable from lived experience" (41). My preference for "affect theories" over "structures of feeling" is that affect theories are located in particular individuals, rather than in some broader social sphere.

cannot be assimilated into other knowledge schemas can be placed and organized. And because affect theories are ways of knowing, they are also, necessarily, ways of *learning*. Thus, when Celia's theory about how her intimacy with Rosalind functions proves unable to explain Rosalind's refusal to be happy, she learns something about that intimacy, and revises her affect theory accordingly. Just as she tells Rosalind that she "could have taught [her] love to take thy father for mine," she teaches herself, her affect theory of intimacy, that Rosalind does not love her as much as she loves Rosalind.

This pedagogical exchange between Rosalind and Celia is emblematic of their relationship, and of the play more generally: the meeting and revision of affect theories is fundamental to the dramatic and thematic structure of *As You Like It*. Without that pedagogical "love / Which teacheth," and without the ongoing revision of affect theories that this pedagogical love produces, *As You Like It* would simply not be a play—there would be no Celia and Rosalind, no Rosalind and Orlando, no Ganymede and Orlando, no Oliver and Celia, no Phoebe and Ganymede, no Phoebe and Silvius, no Touchstone and Audrey. Even Duke Frederick, the primary instigator of the play's inciting conflict, encounters a teacher in the woods—an "old religious man" (the phantasm, perhaps, of Ganymede's imaginary "old religious uncle") with whom the Duke has "some question"—and, as a result of this pedagogical exchange, is "converted" away from the wrath that had driven him into the forest "to take / His brother here and put him to the sword" and toward some gentle peace that urges him "from his enterprise and from the world" (5.4.155-160).

These affective interactions have often taken a backseat to scholarly discussions of the structure and significance of the play's comedic, marital closure or to the "homoeroticism" evident between Ganymede and Orlando (and between the boy and the man who played them)

or, less often, between Rosalind and Celia. This recourse to "homoeroticism," necessary as it once was to privilege, tends also to privilege the gender identities of intimate partners to the detriment of the practices by which those partners become intimate. More often than not, that is, "homoeroticism" says more about the homo than about the erotic, and thus reinstates gender identity as the governing sign of sexuality. As I will show, the female-female intimacies portrayed in *As You Like It*, as well as in one of its dramatic precedents, John Lyly's *Galatea* (1588/92), cannot be fully understood only in terms of gender identity. In the dramatic world of these plays, gender may offer discursive strategies of desire, but those strategies are effected through the quotidian tactics of affective interactions—tactics that are most visible when scholars approach the play at the meso-level of the character, rather than the macro-level of structures of "homoeroticism."

My focus on the affective pedagogies of female-female intimacies on the early modern stage extends my previous chapters' claims about the logistics of sexual practice into the more ineffable registers of quotidian sexual experience. By shifting the scholarly focus on these plays away from the larger meanings and possibilities of "homoeroticism" and toward the moments in which particular characters conjecture about and respond to the affective lives of other characters, I open up new possibilities for understanding sexuality not primarily as a discourse, but as an ongoing practice of relating to and attempting to understand others. Where the texts in my first chapter articulated a form of sexual know-how, this chapter and the following one outline a form of sexual "feel-how" that is embodied on the early modern English stage. A close attention to moments in which characters feel out how they relate to other characters—which are often moments in which characters conjecture about the affective lives of others, in which they try to feel how another character feels—can reveal fault lines in a particular character's larger

assumptions about intimacy, desire, and affect itself. These fault lines can serve as critical entry points into what is taken for granted, sexually, in interactions between characters. And though characters may not be mimetic representations of early moderns themselves, the interpersonal relations dramatized on the early modern English stage do present a rich archive of knowledge about the variety of ways in which early moderns might have expected a person to react to various situations—and thus offers us an archive of knowledge about what they themselves might have taken for granted about sex.

Celia, for instance, is taken aback by Rosalind's emotional reactions to the predicament in which she finds herself. She does not expect Rosalind to persist in her grief over her father's banishment. Celia's own reaction to this affective state of affairs—her pedagogical instinct to reorient the terms of affection and attachment, to be able to "have taught [her] love"—both reveals her assumptions about how she thinks Rosalind should act, and differentiates her own affective orientations from Rosalind's, since Rosalind never does develop the "love / Which teacheth." Readers of the play may find Rosalind's pedagogical shortcomings somewhat surprising, since the central plot of the play involves her, in the guise of Ganymede, teaching Orlando how to love her. Although these scenes between Ganymede and Orlando expressly lay claim to a pedagogy of love, they are consistently followed by interactions between Rosalind and Celia wherein Rosalind/Ganymede is not the teacher, but the student.

At the beginning of Act 4, for instance, after Ganymede has put him through his wooing paces, he literally comes on to Orlando—"I will be your Rosalind in a more coming-on disposition," Ganymede says (4.1.103)—and decides he will marry him, at least within the play-world of their love game. "Come, sister," he says to the usefully nearby Celia, "you shall be the priest and marry us . . . . What do you say, sister?" (4.1.114-116). In a moment more appropriate

to Lear's dreary palace than to the merry forest of Arden, Celia responds: "I cannot say the words" (4.1.118). Rosalind, lacking the love that might "teach" her why Celia refuses the role that is thrust upon her, responds jokingly, "You must begin: 'Will you, Orlando—.'" "Go to," Celia chides, as she initiates the ceremony, speaking the words she, moments earlier, could not say (4.1.119-120).

Celia, of course, *can* say the words—she capitulates to Rosalind's request almost immediately. But not without a moment of rejection, signified not only by her "cannot" but also her "Go to." Modern editorial glosses on this line make clear that scholarly readers of the play have recognized this as an affectively charged moment. But just what exactly makes this moment affectively charged escapes the logic of most glosses. Though Juliet Dusinberre offers no gloss on this "Go to" in her Arden edition, other editors over the past thirty years have been remarkably consistent in their interpretation of this line. In his 1988 Bantam edition, David Bevington writes that "Go to" is "an exclamation of mild impatience," a gloss repeated by almost every editor following him.[213] Alan Brissenden's 1993 Oxford edition, though, is unique in its expansion on this gloss. He writes that "Go to" is "an expression of exasperation, and, in this case, resignation. Celia gives up and begins to paraphrase the marriage service."[214] Brissenden's more expansive gloss is characteristic of his interventionist editorial approach to the play more broadly. For instance, the gloss that immediately precedes this one, the one attached to Celia's contention that she "cannot say the words," is strikingly definitive in its interpretation of Celia's intentions: "Celia is stalling," he writes, "because she knows, as Rosalind does, that a declaration

[213] Bevington (1988), p. 70. Bevington will repeat this gloss verbatim in his 2012 Broadview/Internet Shakespeare Editions edition (p. 149). Pamela Allen Brown and Jean Howard will also repeat Bevington's gloss in their 2014 Bedford/St. Martin's edition (p. 93). In her 2000 Penguin edition, Frances Dolan will offer a similar line: "An expression of impatience, similar to 'come on'" (p. 77).
[214] Brissenden, 192.

of intent to marry by two people before a third constituted a binding contract, *per verba de praesenti*."[215] While Brissenden's contention that Celia might technically be presiding over a *de praesenti* marriage may be historically accurate in its portrayal of the law, his claim that Celia "stalls" *because* of this is strikingly warrantless. Nowhere in the text do either Celia or Rosalind express anything like such a worry.[216]

Given the affective-pedagogical exchanges between Celia and Rosalind in the play's first act, I propose that the "impatience" or "exasperation" resonant in "Go to" is not driven by an unstated anxiety about performing a legally binding marriage; it is, rather, an affective interpretation of the romantic situation that Celia finds herself in. When Rosalind responds jokingly to Celia's serious declaration that she cannot officiate the marriage, Celia realizes that Rosalind doesn't recognize her feelings for her; she once again realizes that "Rosalind lacks then the love / Which teacheth" that she and Celia are "one" (1.3.93-94). Rosalind's request that she officiate the marriage ceremony is, for Celia, yet another instance of a failed love attachment, a mismatch between the type and degree of affection that Celia and Rosalind have for each other. For Celia, this affective interpretation emerges as a rejection of language itself: both "*I* cannot say the words" and "Go to," that is, "stop saying the words *you* are saying."

Rosalind, never one to reject language, continues on in her "love-prate," apparently

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[215] Brissenden, 192. As historical support of this form of *de praesenti* marriage, he goes on to cite John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* and Henry Swinburne's *Treatise of Spousals*.Though the glosses in Brissenden's edition often veer into the interpretive—the beginning of every scene garners a note instructing the reader on what the scene is "about"—his definitive-sounding pronouncement about Celia's concern with the potential legal ramifications of her participation in the marriage ceremony is surprising given that he has, up to this point, had virtually nothing to say about Celia's lines by way of interpretation. But almost every one of Celia's lines in this particular scene prompts an interpretation from him. Her final line, "I'll sleep," for instance, receives this note: "Perhaps Celia is disgruntled and wants to escape from the situation." (Brissenden 196). Just why she may be "disgruntled," though, Brissenden does not say.

[216] In *Desire and Anxiety*, Traub also reads Celia's hesitancy to participate in the ceremony to a fear of a *de praesenti* marriage. Celia "hesitates," she says, "in part because those words possess a ritualistic power to *enact* what is spoken" (127).

uncognizant of Celia's pain (4.1.189-190). Rosalind's failure to recognize Celia's affections is primarily a failure of affective interpretation, of understanding the "processes of self-inquiry, reflection, management, and performance" that Erin Sullivan claims are at the heart of affective life.[217] Though, early in the play, Celia protests to her father that she and Rosalind "still have slept together, / Rose at an instant, learned, played, ate together, / And whereso'er we went, like Juno's swans, / Still we went coupled and inseparable" (1.3.70-73), this inseparability has not, apparently, translated for Rosalind into a ready ability to properly interpret Celia's affects. In the marriage scene, this failure of affective interpretation emerges as a failure of linguistic interpretation: it isn't, as Rosalind seems to think, that Celia cannot say the requisite words, but that she cannot say something like "I love you," and thus, "don't marry him." Theodora Jankowski claims that, in this scene, Rosalind "misuses" "Celia's affections for her."[218] This "misuse" is, it seems to me, a misrecognition or misinterpretation: Rosalind simply does not know how Celia feels. Rosalind lacks, that is, what I will call "affective literacy," the ability to interpret the emotional lives of others.

This lack of affective literacy is dramatized explicitly in the mock marriage scene just after Orlando leaves to meet the Duke. Out of earshot of men, Rosalind ostentatiously offers up to Celia the words that Celia could not say: "O coz, coz, coz, my pretty little coz, that thou didst know how many fathom deep I am in love!" But this love "cannot be sounded," she goes on to say, since her "affection hath an unknown bottom, like the Bay of Portugal" (4.1.193-96). "Or rather bottomless," Celia retorts cynically, "that as fast as you pour affection in, it runs out" (4.1.197-98). For Rosalind, even if her affects are "unknown," they still can be known—one just

[217] Sullivan, 6.
[218] Jankowski, 149.

has to dive deeper into the "Bay" in order to get to the bottom of her feelings. But Celia's understanding of Rosalind's affect is fundamentally different. For her, it is not merely that Rosalind's affects are unknown, but that they cannot be known. You might go searching for the bottom of the jug, but you will only ever come out the other side empty handed: there is nothing real and solid to be found. Whereas Celia is literate in Rosalind's affect, Rosalind is not literate in Celia's. This mismatch in Rosalind's and Celia's conceptualizations of affect underwrites their continued misunderstandings. The rift between Rosalind and Celia—between the "unknown bottom" and the too-well-known bottomlessness—is a conflict between two incommensurate affect theories, and thus, given that Rosalind wants to articulate "how many fathom deep [she is] in love," two incommensurate ways of knowing when, how, and to whom one is attached. The love that one teaches, and the love that in turn "teacheth thee," is an affect theory. And Rosalind and Celia have different ones.

Where Rosalind's affect theory offers an account of the knowledge-of-attachment as a future full of potential, the unknown depths of a bay as yet to be plumbed, Celia's offers an account of the refusal of the knowledge-of-attachment: not a future knowledge, but an endless present ignorance; not a bay with an "unknown bottom," but a sieve without a bottom. And who, in the world of this affect theory, is doing the pouring but Celia herself, the faithful companion, tenuously attached to Rosalind by a force only recognizable as feeling, and consistently misrecognized by its love object? Celia may love Rosalind, may pour her affections in, but Rosalind has no theory by which such love might be held onto, and thus no knowledge of that love—no love that teaches her that she and Celia are one.

Queer readings of *As You Like It* almost never take up the various moments in which

Celia signals that her relationship with Rosalind might not be satisfactory.[219] Instead, they almost invariably emphasizing the frisson of male homoeroticism sparked by Ganymede and Orlando's love games, or by Phoebe's desires for the feminine features of Rosalind shining through Ganymede, but relying only on the reports of Charles and Le Beau as evidence of a homoerotic relationship between Rosalind and Celia. For these critics, the play is indelibly homoerotic, even as various ideological forces (most often marriage) might seek to contain that homoeroticism. Julie Crawford has argued that the force of containment is not, however, complete, insofar as the play's female homoeroticism extends beyond its narrative bounds into Rosalind's promise to the audience, in the epilogue, that "if I were a woman, I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me" (Epilogue 16-18). "In this particular moment," Crawford argues, "Rosalind is addressing herself, coyly and homoerotically, to the women in the audience *as a woman*" since "the beards which pleased her most might have been *no beards at all*."[220] She goes on to argue that the heterosexual marriages with which the play ends are not impediments to the female homoeroticism animating the play, but are in fact one of the enabling factors of its continuance past the bounds of the play proper.[221] Because Rosalind and Celia marry brothers, Crawford argues, they are bound in an ongoing, and homoerotic, relation.

While I agree with Crawford that Rosalind's epilogue extends the play's homoeroticism, I would suggest that the play's suggestion of a queer relation between Rosalind and the audience is not a clear marker of a queer liberation to be celebrated. Given Rosalind's inability throughout

[219] DiGangi, for instance, notes that the play dramatizes both "female homoerotic desire (Celia's for Rosalind) and male homoerotic desire (Orlando's for Ganymede)" (50), though he quickly does away with Celia by arguing that "Rosalind's desire for Orlando relegates Celia's desire for her to a safely distanced past" (52). He spends more time discussing the homoeroticism of Rosalind and Phoebe, as does Traub (*Desire* 125), though she does offer a brief reading of Celia's disappointments with Rosalind (*Renaissance* 171-2).

[220] Crawford, 143, emphasis hers.

[221] Crawford, 152.

the play to address herself, "coyly and homoerotically," to Celia, this sudden queer turn in the epilogue redoubles the failures of their relationship—failures that *As You Like It* dramatizes in its embodiment of competing affect theories. And though Celia and Rosalind are socially united by their marriages to brothers, given Rosalind's repeated misrecognition of Celia's affections, it is far from clear that this continued relationship would constitute a homo*erotic* relationship—and if it does, why should we assume that the pre-marriage and post-marriage homoeroticisms are the same? Indeed, the label "homoerotic" is precisely what is at issue here.

How to Do the History of Homoeroticism?

As Valerie Traub has recently argued, "the concept of the 'homoerotic' . . . serves to designate *some*thing, but in point of fact, *not too precisely*."[222] That term's capaciousness concatenates various different relationships whose affective characteristics, and thus lived experiences, are not necessarily equivalent or equitable. "Homoeroticism" thus demands a critical genealogy that can account for its affordances as well as its drawbacks, and thereby reorient the terms of queer inquiry.

There are, as with all genealogies, multiple ways to split the root, but the genealogy of "homoeroticism" in early modern studies that I will trace here begins in the early 1990s, as gay and lesbian (and, soon after, queer) criticism began to self-consciously take stock of itself as a field of inquiry. The use of the term "homoeroticism" predates the early '90s, of course—Joseph Pequigney's *Such Is My Love* (1985) includes an entire chapter entitled "The Expressions of Homoeroticism"—but its use and theorization became much more pronounced as queer theory's

[222] Traub, *Thinking Sex*, 15, emphasis in the original.

provocations began to encourage the history of sexuality to take stock of its historiographic assumptions and methods. In *Sodomy and Interpretation* (1991), Gregory Bredbeck defined "homoeroticism" as "same-sex attraction" and noted that it is "*not* the same as homosexuality."[223] But if "homoeroticism" might nevertheless still seem too akin to homosexuality, and thus guilty of the same historiographic sins of imputing a modern identity category to premodernity, he was, he said, willing to "risk" the possibility of sexual essentialism in order to "speak of homoeroticism *as* homoeroticism—as a specifically identifiable phenomenon."[224] Despite the self-conscious, metacritical clarity of his work, how this "specifically identifiable" homoeroticism might be identified was left unsaid. That same year, despite making clear that his goal was, in part, "learning to unthink 'homosexuality' as a subject of inquiry,"[225] Bruce Smith's *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England* (1991) did not oppose "homoeroticism" to "homosexuality" like Bredbeck. In fact, in his usage, homoeroticism produces homosexuality: "To understand homosexuality in early modern England," he said, "we need to investigate not just what was prohibited but what was actively homoeroticized."[226]

The next year, in *Desire and Anxiety* (1992), Traub detailed how previous feminist and historicist criticism of Shakespeare almost invariably conflated gender and sexuality by imputing a heterosexual structure onto any and all relationships—a conflation these critics inherited, she claimed, from psychoanalytic models of desire. At best, in such criticism, the possibility of same-sex relations was predicated upon a model of inversion, whereby same-sex desire was an outgrowth of cross-sex identification. Effete men might desire other men and butch women

[223] Bredbeck, xii-xiii.
[224] Bredbeck, 24.
[225] Smith, 12.
[226] Smith, 13.

might desire other women, but they do so primarily because of their gender. Traub's shift to the language of "homoeroticism" was meant to disrupt this critical commonplace and to insist that gender and sexuality were invariably interlocking, but nevertheless distinct, ways of being and categories of analysis. By turning toward "homoeroticism," Traub followed in a tradition of gay and lesbian criticism in which, she claimed, "gender and eroticism not only are explicitly differentiated, but each is given greater specificity."[227]

"Homoeroticism" need not necessarily have caught on. As theoretically robust and explicit as her separation of gender and sexuality is, Traub's turn to the language of "homoeroticism" is subtle—the term itself appears with no particular critical fanfare and is left undefined throughout *Desire and Anxiety*, as it was in the work, like Bredbeck's, that preceded it. "Homoeroticism" hardly appears at all—just four times, by my count, and all in quotations or paraphrase—in Jonathan Goldberg's contemporaneous *Sodometries* (1992), a text which has had considerable influence in early modern sexuality studies. Goldberg also manages to avoid the term entirely in his introduction to the field-defining *Queering the Renaissance* (1994), as do all of the contributors save Traub. "Homoeroticism," then, might not have gained the enormous critical traction it currently enjoys were it not for its much more explicit theorization (if not definition) a few years later in Mario DiGangi's *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama* (1997). DiGangi extended Traub's use of "homoeroticism" and her desire for a "greater specificity" of sexual criticism. For him, as it was for Bredbeck, "homoeroticism" was designed not to diacritically mark the distinction between gender and sexuality, but to avoid the anachronism of the identitarian "homosexual" moniker, and thus to allow him to be "more

[227] Traub, *Desire*, 98.

careful with terminology"[228] in his attempt to provide a more "rigorously materialist"[229]—which is to say, more "historicist"[230]—analysis than had previous critics who relied on "psychoanalytic and deconstructive" methods.[231]

Of course, Traub—presumably one of the "psychoanalytic" critics from whom DiGangi differentiated himself—had also claimed that "the problems posed by erotic desire demand feminist analysis" not only in the form of "psychoanalysis of subjective states of desire" but also in the form of "historical materialist analysis of ideological and material practices."[232] Thus, despite DiGangi's claim to be more "rigorously materialist," he and Traub shared a critical habitus in which historicizing meant, in Traub's words, "specifying erotic discourses and practices; [and] describing institutional delimitations on erotic practice"[233] or, in DiGangi's, placing "sexual practices within their historical and ideological contexts," an endeavor that "requires precision concerning the various forms and meanings of homoerotic practices."[234] Both critics characterized their turns toward "homoeroticism" as producing "greater specificity" and "more careful" and "rigorous" accounts of the discourses, ideologies, and institutions that subtend sexual or erotic "practices." And yet, DiGangi also noted that the term "homoerotic" (used from the very first sentence of his book as if it were a straightforward concept in need of, and thus given, no definition) and its partner, "heteroerotic," "do not indicate in themselves—and

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[228] DiGangi, 32.
[229] DiGangi, 9.
[230] DiGangi, 4.
[231] DiGangi, 9. Traub will make a somewhat similar claim in *The Renaissance of Lesbianism* (2002): homoeroticism, she writes, "conveys a more fluid and contingent sense of erotic affect than either 'lesbian' or 'homosexual' (16). Interesting, though DiGangi emphasizes specificity and Traub emphasizes fluidity, both position "homoeroticism" as somehow more critically useful than "homosexual." In her later study of female-female homoeroticms in early modern drama, Denise Walen will also explicitly claim her use of the phrase "female homoeroticism" as a method of avoiding the term "lesbian" (*Constructions*, 6-7).
[232] Traub, *Desire*, 114.
[233] Traub, *Desire*, 102.
[234] DiGangi, 4.

may even elide—the status configurations or the political significance" of sexual practices.[235] To be rigorously materialist, on this account, one must be careful with terminology and precise in one's analyses of the historical and ideological contexts of various practices, even as the concept that supposedly renders those practices legible in the first place may also elide their political significance, presumably the very thing which a materialist analysis would hope to analyze.

Given the fundamental contradiction between the admitted analytic effects of a reliance on "homoeroticism" (the elision of "political significance") and the stated analytic goals of its use ("greater specificity"), it is unsurprising that, at the level of the sentence, the widespread use of the term "homoerotic" by a variety of critics over the past thirty years has been far from "careful." The adjective "homoerotic" attaches itself to a wide variety of nouns, each suggesting a different—and sometimes radically different—conceptualization of what constitutes the sexual. "Practices,"[236] "behavior,"[237] "acts,"[238] and "activity"[239] can all be homoerotic, but so too can "companionship,"[240] "friendship,"[241] "fellowship,"[242] "relations,"[243] "bonds,"[244] "exchanges,"[245] "liaisons,"[246] "encounters,"[247] "meetings,"[248] "interaction,"[249] "attachments,"[250] "affinities,"[251]

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[235] DiGangi, 6.
[236] Traub, *Desire*, 105. DiGangi, 1. Crawford, 140.
[237] Bredbeck, 18. DiGangi, 6.
[238] Rambuss, 153n67.
[239] Bredbeck, 20. Traub, *Desire*, 106. DiGangi, 50. Crawford, 140.
[240] DiGangi, 31.
[241] Traub, *Renaissance*, 345.
[242] Crawford, 154.
[243] DiGangi, 9. Crawford, 137.
[244] DiGangi, 25. Schwarz, 221. Traub, *Renaissance*, 174.
[245] Traub, *Desire*, 93.
[246] Traub, *Renaissance*, 229.
[247] Traub, *Desire*, 94.
[248] Bredbeck, 7.
[249] Bredbeck, 18.
[250] Traub, *Renaissance*, 54. Walen, *Constructions*, 2.
[251] Walen, *Constructions*, 8.

"attractions,"[252] "violence,"[253] "interests,"[254] "motives,"[255] "scenarios,"[256] "tendencies,"[257] "titillation,"[258] and the even more vague "dynamics,"[259] "energy,"[260] and "content."[261] Sometimes homoeroticism is a space, a "penumbra"[262] or an "environment"[263] with "dimensions"[264] that can be "explored,"[265] and sometimes, in its "pervasiveness"[266] and its capacity to "suffus[e],"[267] it takes up space. "Flexions,"[268] "vectors,"[269] "currents,"[270] and "stasis"[271] can also be homoerotic, suggesting that homoeroticism has the capacity to move or to be still.

"Feeling"[272]—"affect,"[273] "affection,"[274] "sensuality,"[275] "pleasure"[276]—can be homoerotic, and thus homoeroticism can be an "embodied"[277] "experience;"[278] but it can also

[252] Traub, *Renaissance*, 36.
[253] Schwarz, 36.
[254] Rambuss, 7.
[255] Traub, *Renaissance*, 11.
[256] Walen, *Constructions*, 1.
[257] Bredbeck, 4.
[258] Smith, 134.
[259] Bredbeck, 3. DiGangi, 24. Crawford, "Homoerotics," 139.
[260] Smith, 125. Traub, *Desire*, 113. Rambuss, 7.
[261] Traub, *Renaissance*, 296.
[262] Rambuss, 13.
[263] DiGangi, 24.
[264] DiGangi, 29.
[265] Traub, *Desire*, 118.
[266] DiGangi, 2.
[267] Traub, *Renaissance*, 230.
[268] Rambuss, 42.
[269] Rambuss, 146n37.
[270] Rambuss, 56.
[271] Schwarz, 143.
[272] Smith, 63.
[273] Rambuss, 65. Traub, *Renaissance*, 18.
[274] DiGangi, 25.
[275] DiGangi, 28.
[276] DiGangi, 50.
[277] Traub, *Desire*, 143.
[278] Traub, *Desire*, 103.

take the form of disembodied "significations,"[279] "cultural forms,"[280] and "discourse."[281] Sometimes "deviancy"[282] is homoerotic, but other homoerotic "relations" are "authorized," as in the case of "male friendship, patronage, and pedagogy."[283] And insofar as those "authorized homoerotic relations" are "nonsodomitical forms of Renaissance homoeroticism" they are also "alternative homoeroticisms."[284] "Desire,"[285] "fantasy,"[286] "love,"[287] and sometimes "lust,"[288] can be homoerotic**,** but so can "styles," "rules," and "mode[s]."[289] "Homoerotic desire" is also something that can be "rechanel[ed]"[290] into, or "displace[d]"[291] onto, other, less homoerotic, objects. Should one find oneself in a playful mood, perhaps looking for some "homoerotic extravagance,"[292] "games"[293] and even "play"[294] itself can be homoerotic; but should one find oneself feeling more serious, there is a homoerotic "analytic"[295] to suit one's homoerotic "interest."[296] Texts and their various constitutive elements— "poetry,"[297] "narrative,"[298]

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[279] Traub, *Desire*, 124.
[280] Traub, *Desire*, 103.
[281] DiGangi, 24.
[282] Traub, *Desire*, 110.
[283] DiGangi, 7.
[284] DiGangi, 6.
[285] Bredbeck, 27. Smith, 59. Traub, *Desire*, 93. DiGangi, 3-4. Rambuss, 67. Schwarz, 27. Traub, *Renaissance*, 56. Crawford, 139. Walen, *Constructions*, 1.
[286] Smith, 134.
[287] Traub, *Desire*, 105.
[288] DiGangi, 21.
[289] Traub, *Desire*, 94.
[290] DiGangi, 58.
[291] Traub, *Renaissance*, 180.
[292] Walen, *Constructions*, 16.
[293] Smith, 109.
[294] Traub, *Desire*, 123.
[295] Traub, *Desire*, 120.
[296] Walen, *Constructions*, 18.
[297] Pequigney, 1. Andreadis, 48.
[298] Walen, *Constructions*, 1.

"verses,"[299] "images"[300] (or "imagery")[301], "themes"[302] and "subtexts"[303]—can all be homoerotic, as can more amorphous literary concepts like "connotations,"[304] "constructions,"[305] "tension,"[306] "rhetorical space,"[307] and "means of expression."[308] Indeed, "literary history,"[309] "criticism"[310] and even "meaning"[311] itself can be homoerotic. Both "subjects"[312] and "allegory" can be "homoerotically coded,"[313] a code that presumably demands some sort of "homoerotic awareness"[314] in order to be understood. Surprisingly, given its initial use as an alternative for the identitarian "homosexual," even "identity" can be homoerotic.[315] The linguistic and conceptual possibilities of homoeroticism are bounded, apparently, only by the homoeroticism of "possibilities" themselves.[316]

In fact, the term homoeroticism is so conceptually sticky that the seemingly redundant phrase "homoerotic sexuality"[317] not only makes sense, but seems to be necessary in order to clarify that, though it attaches itself readily to just about any concept, homoeroticism is, after all, meant to say something—but what?—about sexuality. Together, these disparate conceptions of

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[299] Smith, 178.
[300] Smith, 35. Walen, *Constructions*, 4.
[301] Bredbeck, 28. Smith, 26. Traub, *Renaissance*, 11.
[302] Guy-Bray, 5.
[303] Walen, *Constructions*, 5.
[304] Crawford, 148.
[305] Walen, *Constructions*, 2.
[306] Walen, *Constructions*, 11.
[307] Schwarz, 220.
[308] Traub, *Renaissance*, 18.
[309] Traub, *Renaissance*, 11.
[310] Crawford, 139.
[311] Bredbeck, 28.
[312] Walen, *Constructions*, 5.
[313] Walen, *Constructions*, 13.
[314] Walen, *Constructions*, 11.
[315] Schwarz, 236.
[316] DiGangi, 6. Rambuss, 49. Andreadis, 214n13. Crawford, 147.
[317] Traub, *Desire*, 105.

what counts as "homoerotic"—sometimes actions, sometimes relationships, sometimes spaces, sometimes emotions, sometimes literary forms, sometimes ideas—constitute "the homoerotics"[318] of a given predicament or text, a phrase presumably modeled on "the poetics" of a text, though without the thousands of years of critical debate over what "the poetics" of a text might mean.

Grounding the wide conceptual travels of "homoeroticism" is a single, supposedly stable, referent: same-sex. Even as it was developed to interrupt a critical tendency to conflate gender and sexuality, homoeroticism, as Traub readily admits, "continues to pay implicit obeisance to the prestige of object choice as the primary criterion of sexuality."[319] In fact, homoeroticism is so anchored to gender identity that its use ironically has an almost identical effect to one of the critical terms, "feminine desire," to which Traub is explicitly opposed. "The adjectival link between 'feminine' and 'desire,'" she argues, "neutralizes the difference between an ascribed gendered subject-position and the erotic experiences and expressions of a female subject . . . . Generated as an appeal, 'feminine desire' in fact operates as a trick, a double bind for women always already confined by their previous definition."[320]

Much the same could be said of homoeroticism. Even as it tends to interrupt the critical tendency to conflate gender *expression* and sexuality, the adjectival link between "homoerotic" and the myriad terms to which it couples installs the gender *identities* of both subjects and objects as the "primary criterion of sexuality." Generated as an appeal to the broad horizons of sexual experience wherein "the gender of object choice is only one variable among many,"[321]

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[318] Traub, 118. DiGangi, 1, et passim. Crawford, 137. Walen, *Constructions*, 5.
[319] Traub, *Desire*, 115.
[320] Traub, *Desire*, 96.
[321] Traub, *Desire*, 100.

"homoeroticism" in fact operates as a trick, a double bind for erotic subjects always already confined by both their own gender identity and their partners'. Traub foresees this consequence of the recourse to a term like "homoeroticism" when she notes that "the difficulty of extracting a new erotic vocabulary out of the polarities of gender testifies both to the enduring consequences of a highly gender-inflected language, and to the imaginative limitations of us all; we can barely conceive of an eroticism even partially free from gender constraints."[322] These collective imaginative limitations have left us with a critical concept that is almost all homo with very little eros. But is gender identity a category coherent enough to bind together work by a critic who speaks of eros in terms of spatial metaphors and another who speaks of eros in terms of literary metaphors? How is one to come to terms with the history of "homoeroticism" if one isn't even sure what "homoeroticism" is?

My goal is not to fault other critics for not being sufficiently careful with their use of terminology. Not only would such a project attract stones to my own glass house—I have myself relied on many of the uses of "homoerotic" that I have just outlined—but it would also unfairly discount the significant work to which each of these critics has put "homoeroticism" in a collective project of sketching the contours of historical sexual relations. In fact, my goal is quite the opposite: rather than calling for more care in our use of terminology, I want to pause over the often stated desire to be more careful, more specific, more precise, more historical. If a desire for analytic precision has produced and sustained for more than two decades a concept as imprecise as "homoeroticism," perhaps we should consider homoeroticism's imprecision not a critical flaw, but a critical opportunity. The conceptual stickiness of homoeroticism, that is, might be not a bug, but a feature. Even as she employed the term herself, Traub noted that "homoeroticism is

[322] Traub, *Desire*, 102.

the subject of peculiar rhetorical slippages; such slippages, I believe, indicate untheorized assumptions circulating throughout our critical discourse."[323] What remains untheorized, over twenty-five years later, are the various methods by which particular critics recognize the eros of a relationship they label "homoerotic." The semantic stickiness of "homoeroticism" indicates, I think, that the broad range of same-sex relations that critics have tracked across early modern England cannot be adequately accounted for solely by reference to the gender identities of the various parties involved in any particular predicament. That is, what these "homoerotic" relations share—same-sex partners—might be less important than the ways in which they differ. "Structural congruity," as Traub notes, "is not isomorphism."[324]

I want to suggest, then, that the ineffable semantic, and thus conceptual, excess of homoeroticism is actually a diagnostic of the ineffable affective excess of sexuality. The language of affect—of affection or disaffection, of sensation and sensuality—often crops up on the edges of discussions of "homoeroticism." For instance, Traub's use of "homoeroticism" in *The Renaissance of Lesbianism* is explicitly linked to affect: "while somewhat cumbersome and etymologically predicated on gender sameness," she writes, homoeroticism nevertheless "conveys a more fluid and contingent sense of erotic affect than either 'lesbian' or 'homosexual.'"[325] But even as critics are likely to gesture toward the affects—the desires, longings, and pleasures—that subtend "homoeroticism," they are even more likely to swerve back to questions of literary genre, or the institutional discourses of law or medicine, or to

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[323] Traub, *Desire*, 93.

[324] Traub, *Desire*, 105. Traub makes a similar argument about the effects of treating structural congruity as if it were isomorphism in her "New Unhistoricism in Queer Studies." In the course of her critique of "homohistory," she argues that "'homo' and 'hetero' serve as mobile conceptual lynchpins, used theoretically to suture together diverse phenomena; but they fail to attach to, much less elucidate, specific social conditions or material embodiments" (*Thinking Sex* 73). In its wide semantic travels, the "homo" of "homoeroticism" also "suture[s] together diverse phenomena"—phenomena which may be worth considering separately.

[325] Traub, *Renaissance*, 16.

marriage and religious discourse, or to social custom more broadly. It seems to me, then, that when critics have recognized a particular predicament as "homoerotic," they have implicitly recognized some sort of affective negotiation between characters or persons, taken those negotiations as evidence of homoeroticism, and then explicitly assimilated those "homoerotic" relationships into more clearly, and critically recognizable, discursive categories like gender, marriage, virginity, chastity, friendship, or sodomy—all the while, and presumably unwittingly, sublimating the initial affective evidence that sparked their sexual recognition in the first place. That is, scholars have jumped from a micro-level analysis (the language of individual passages) to a macro-level analysis (the socio-political), often without offering an account of the conceptual bridge—the messy meso-level of negotiating and working through various different feelings and desires—that joins those two levels of analysis.

We can see this at work, for instance, in criticism of *As You Like It*. Just as Celia takes Rosalind's grief as evidence of a disjuncture between their theories of attachment, so too have critics taken Celia's negative affect as evidence of her love for Rosalind. In short: outside the reports of men, we know that Celia's into Rosalind because when Rosalind's into Orlando, Celia feels bad. This adduction of affect as evidence of desire draws on one of the most pervasive colloquial theories of sexuality—so pervasive that it has been almost entirely naturalized. When we say that we "have feelings for someone," we mean that we take particular affects—liking, interest, envy, excitement—to be diagnoses of an underlying sexual (or romantic) desire.[326]

And this conceptualization of affect as evidence of desire makes it way into critical discourse, too. Will Fisher, for example, is symptomatic of a larger interpretive trend when he says that "if Celia thus plays the part of the jilted companion in *As You Like It,* it must be said

[326] For more on "liking" as an affect, see Ball.

that this characterization is unique to Shakespeare's rendition of the story. Celia does not *manifest such feelings* in his source."[327] Traub makes similar claims: "Celia's speeches to Rosalind," she says, "are as *emotionally and erotically* compelling as anything spoken in the heteroerotic moments" in the play.[328] She goes on to claim that "generally, it is the female rather than the male characters of these plays who, by their silent denial of another woman's *emotional claims,* position *homoerotic desire* in the past,"[329] and that Celia asks "us to recognize female unity as parallel in its *emotional intensity* and *physical closeness* to that of marriage."[330] This language of affect-as-evidence-of-desire is not limited to readings of *As You Like It*. Discussing John Lyly's *Galatea*, Denise Walen notes that "the disguised heroine . . . finds herself the object of another woman's—the desiring subject's—*affections*."[331] Though these critics figure "homoeroticism" as both desire and physical proximity, it is invariably coordinated with affect. Such a coordination is, in my view, astute and useful; but because it has gone unremarked upon, it has yet to rise to the level of a methodological principle.

Were our goal critical precision, the recognition that the evidence of homoeroticism is almost invariably affective would be of little help. After all, "affect" itself is a notoriously imprecise category. But affect is also a category *of* the imprecise, the messy, the not-quite-conscious processing of a given relation. An affect is, according to Rei Terada, an "interpretation of a predicament," but one that does not necessarily emerge into language—or at least not straightforwardly.[332] The emotions stirred by a given erotic event—say, the disappointment you

[327] Fisher, 10, emphasis mine.
[328] Traub, *Renaissance*, 171, emphasis mine.
[329] Traub, *Renaissance*, 174, emphasis mine.
[330] Traub, *Renaissance*, 171-172, emphasis mine.
[331] Walen, *Constructions* 2, emphasis mine.
[332] Terada, 57.

may feel when someone you love doesn't love you back—are the symptoms of an ongoing practice of sexual knowledge production. This practice takes place not at the level of discourse or ideology per se—though it is invariably shaped by them—but at the level of the individual. When critics discuss "the homoerotics" of a text, they are registering the effects of this practice while rarely theorizing its methods.

Early in *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama,* DiGangi differentiates between "sexuality," which for him marks "the social organization of erotic meanings and practices" and "homosexual," which he uses "only in the most mechanical, banal, sense: to refer to sexual acts between people of the same sex."[333] He does so because, he says, "this usage of 'homosexual' avoids oddly euphemistic locutions like 'homoerotic sex.'"[334] But why should it be the case that "homoerotic sex" is euphemistic while "homoerotic desire" is not? DiGangi is right, I think, to deem "homoerotic sex" "oddly euphemistic," but not because "sexual acts between people of the same sex" are somehow "mechanical" and "banal," and thus not in need of the discursive powers of "homoerotic." As I argued in the first two chapters, there is nothing at all "banal" about the mechanics of sex. Instead, "homoerotic sex" is euphemistic because the concept of "homoeroticism" itself functions like a euphemism, substituting the ineffability of the affects it registers for the more clearly defined—because more clearly textual—realm of the discourses which surrounded and produce "sexuality." The critical success of "homoeroticism," then, is driven less by its ability to more precisely name non-identitarian sexual relations and more by its ability to acknowledge and then bracket the affective realm of sexual experience in order to clear

[333] DiGangi, 3. This usage follows Bray, who uses "the term homosexuality . . . in as directly physical—and hence culturally neutral—a sense as possible" (*Homosexuality* 17). Of course, as I have shown in the first two chapters, there is little that is "culturally neutral" about the "physical" acts that constitute sex.
[334] DiGangi, 3.

the ground for inquiry into the discursively oriented "social organization of erotic meanings and practices."

The cost of this success, however, is that this bracketing takes the form of a euphemistic disavowal of ignorance. A euphemism's substitutive powers, after all, rely on its audience being "in the know" in order to understand both the phrase itself and the concept for which is it substituted. But insofar as an affect is an "interpretation of a predicament," it is an interpretation that, because it takes the form of an emotional state, is itself in need of interpretation. The affective subject knows something without "knowing" it in language—she has knowledge without being "in the know." Because "homoeroticism" functions like a euphemism, it substitutes this affective knowledge for a discursive knowledge, a "lossy" form of conceptual compression that leaves behind the important, and uninterpreted, epistemological baggage of an affective knowledge relation.

It is this epistemological baggage, and thus the methods through which individual subjects come to understand their own quotidian affects, that "homoeroticism" has obscured from the critical record. To get at this, I want to zero in on the essay that originally convinced me that there was something to be gained from a critical genealogy of "homoeroticism." Julie Crawford's astute overview of Shakespearean criticism of "homoeroticism" is so comprehensive in its scope that it is perfectly symptomatic of the larger tendencies of the field, and thus a useful tool for diagnosing some of the work that "homoeroticism" is doing for (literary) historians of sexuality. Crawford claims that "queer scholarship has helped us to see the varied forms of affective relations and social alliances represented in [Shakespeare's] plays."[335] But in a rhetorical progression that is emblematic of the field more broadly, it becomes clear in the next

[335] Crawford, 138.

sentence—"Queer scholarship on Shakespeare offers us ways to see the social systems in which homoeroticism was present and to understand the erotic categories of an earlier culture"[336] —that the "social alliances" and the "social systems" to which those alliances belong take critical precedence over "affective relations."

This turn away from affect and toward the "social" results in a variety of different affective relations being flattened under the moniker of "homoeroticism." For instance, while she convincingly outlines women's "deployment of the marital institution for their own ends" in terms of property exchange and social status, Crawford gives no indication that the "homoeroticism" evident in Celia's and Rosalind's relationship might be on rocky affective ground—or, even more importantly, that its affective character might change after marriage "enables" it to continue.[337] Throughout the essay, her oscillation between the terms "homosocial" and "homoerotic" indicates an uncertainty about the affective character of relationships that are bound together merely by their homo-ness. That the term "homoeroticism" can be used to describe both Helena's relationship with the Countess in *All's Well* and Celia's relationship with Rosalind in *As You Like It* indicates that homoeroticism's euphemistic disavowal of its affective-epistemological baggage tends to flatten the differences between relationships that, while similar in their structures, differ greatly in their content.

What is to be done, then? I see two possible methods of wrestling with the critical side effects of "homoeroticism." On the one hand, one might continue to employ the term, but employ it with a metacritical awareness of its implicit evidentiary procedures and analytic effects. This awareness might lead to new texts and insights, but it might also lead us back to old

[336] Crawford, 138.
[337] Crawford, 152.

texts and insights, since this metacritical awareness would necessarily encourage a reevaluation of existing criticism. Indeed, the rich body of scholarship on "the homoerotics" of early modernity might serve as a fecund archive for future work on sexual affect, since virtually every relationship or text that has been labeled "homoerotic" over the past few decades awaits further affective analysis. There is much to be gained from approaching these "homoerotic" texts and relationships with new questions about the eros of homoeroticism. Are there particular affects that are more likely than others to spark a homoerotic identification—and if so, what is it about those affects that makes them more erotic than others? How are those affects produced, and how are they interpreted by the people or characters experiencing them? Are some "homoerotic" affects more likely to lead to sex acts? Do some foreclose sex acts? Are there intragender differences in the experience of "homoerotic" affects—that is, are some women more likely to experience particular "homoerotic" affects than are other women? How do other vectors of subjectification—race, ethnicity, disability, religion, class—rearrange the field of "homoerotic" affects? To my mind, pursuing such questions would be a fruitful avenue for understanding the intersections of (the histories of) sexuality and emotion.[338]

On the other hand, one might simply abandon the term altogether. I have tried, wherever possible, to follow this latter path. My choice to avoid the term—or, at least, to try to avoid it—is not driven by a conviction that its euphemistic qualities render it an unsalvageable analytic. The effects for which "homoeroticism" was originally employed—the historical distinction between homosexuality and whatever erotic formations might have preceded it, and the interruption of a hetero-teleological script whereby one's gender expression leads directly to one's sexual

[338] Such questions might also serve as useful catalysts for short-circuiting the circular terminological debates that have plagued affect theory in recent years, since they offer entry points into specific affective relations, rather than tackling "affect" as a wider phenomenon. See, for instance, Gregg and Siegworth; Massumi; and, for an analysis grounded in early modernity, Robinson.

preferences—are still vital to the historical study of sexuality. But insofar as "homoeroticism" sublimates and thereby obscures affect, flattens substantive differences among relationships that are only structurally similar, and implicitly (and often explicitly) reinstates gendered object choice as the primary determinant of sexuality, there is potentially much to be gained by turning away from the term.

Where my reading of *As You Like It* served in large part as a tool for sussing out the limits of "homoeroticism," I turn now to one of its sources, John Lyly's *Galatea*, in order to see what might be gained from a reading of one of the most blatantly "homoerotic" plays of the early modern English canon without recourse to the concept of "homoeroticism." *Galatea* is a perfect test case for the affordances of avoiding "homoeroticism" not only because it has so often been read as a "homoerotic" play, but also because, as Andy Kesson has argued, "as a principal dramatist of ambiguity and uncertainty, [Lyly] is especially helpful in relation to current debates about the history of emotion."[339] A focus not on the homo but on the eros in Lyly's play—not on gender but on the affective negotiations between the play's main characters—not only reveals more about the affects that subtend erotic relations, but also helps scholars raise new questions about the phenomenological experience of gender, and the rhetorical strategies for representing that affective and gendered phenomenology.

The Sexual Subjunctive

Galatea begins in a pastoral mood. The audience learns that "the sun doth beat upon the plain fields," and Galatea and her father Tityrus sit down under a "fair oak" while they "enjoy

[339] Kesson, "'They that read in a maze,'" 178.

the fresh air" (1.1.1-4).[340] In this "pleasant green," with a "flock" of animals roaming about, Galatea, dressed as a boy, asks her father to tell her why he has "thus disguised her"—but only "if it please" him to do so (1.1.6-10). This concern with pastoral pleasures dissipates quickly, as the play immediately turns to an historical invasion ("the land being oppressed by Danes," 1.1.24); a past ecological disaster ("the seas . . . break their bounds," 1.1.30) and the threat of its reprise; and a whole host of negative affects. Neptune is "enraged" (1.1.28) and full of "wrath" (1.1.43), the people are "miserable" (1.1.45), cows flee in "terror" of "a monster called the Agar" (1.1.53-4), young virgins are "bound to endure . . . horror" (1.1.56), and Tityrus is "fearful" (1.1.73) of a future filled with "intolerable grief" (1.1.69). It isn't always sunny in Lincolnshire.

This first scene is also fundamentally pedagogical. Tityrus teaches Galatea both the history of their town, and—as this barrage of fearful and painful emotions suggests—how to recognize, interpret, and respond to a variety of affective states. While Tityrus's speech establishes for the audience the central plot of the play, it also asks Galatea to imagine both a different ecological past—"Then might you see ships sail where sheep fed," Tityrus tells her, and "anchors cast where ploughs go" (1.1.33-34)—and a different affective future, one in which Tityrus is not driven by fear. And yet, though Tityrus explicitly asks Galatea to perform one sort of imaginative act, he also explicitly forbids another, since he tells her that "it is not permitted to know" if the Agar eats the sacrificed virgin or carries her off to Neptune. And not only can she not know, but it even "incurreth danger to conjecture" (1.1.60-61) about the virgin's fate. Some forms of conjecture are dangerous, Tityrus teaches his daughter. But others—imagining how a

[340] All citations of *Galatea* refer to Leah Scragg's Revels edition. Because both Galatea and Phillida, to varying degrees, resist and/or worry about their inhabiting of boyhood, I have chosen to refer to them as "girls" and with she/her pronouns throughout this chapter. This choice, I hope, does not foreclose a trans-affirmative reading of the play. Indeed, resistance to particular forms of gender performance (e.g. types of dress or social scripts) and worry about the violence one might incur for transgressing gender norms in public are both parts of many trans people's lives.

dark past might give way to a brighter future—are the keys to survival.

Though Tityrus may warn against it, "conjecture" is one of the primary modes of interpersonal relations in *Galatea*. Where *As You Like It* staged the unfortunate convergence of disparate affect theories, and thus the asymmetries and failures of affective literacy, *Galatea* dramatizes the mutual act of conjecturing about the causes and qualities of the affective lives of others. Affective literacy was obliquely visible in Shakespeare's play in the moments in which it failed; Lyly, on the other hand, relies on monologues and asides in order to explicitly stage the process of reading affect—affects that are, more often than not, sexual. This process often happens in the subjunctive mood, that form of language where certainty and declaration give way to possibility and conjecture. These sexual subjunctives allow Lyly to dramatize those aspects of intimate relationships that have flown beneath our scholarly radars—in part because they are sublimated processes that do not often straightforwardly emerge into the linguistic record, and in part because of the gravitational pull of "homoeroticism" in histories of sexuality that privilege literary archives. A close attention to the affective literacies at play in *Galatea* can offer historians of sexuality one glimpse of the quotidian affective relations of intimate relationships in early modern England.

Though *Galatea* is a comedy, when its characters are feeling and interpreting feeling, they most often find themselves in the realm of "fear." For instance, just as Tityrus has done, Melibeus also instructs his daughter, Phillida, to dress as a man in order to save her from the Agar. As in the play's opening scene, fear is this scene's governing affect: Melibeus "fear[s]" that Phillida is "too fair" (1.3.1) and assuages her misgivings about crossdressing by telling her that she should "fear not" since "use will make it easy; fear must make it necessary" (1.3.24-25). This doubling of "fear" presents an affective conundrum: Phillida should not fear crossdressing,

but she should not fear crossdressing precisely because fear is what should lead her to crossdress. The "it" of "fear must make it necessary," then, is just as much Melibeus's order to "fear not" as it is his order to dress as a boy. To fear and not to fear: that is the injunction. But logically incoherent as it may be, this very manipulation of affects—using fear to eliminate fear—is the primary purpose of Melibeus's plan. He tells Phillida that she must "disguise [herself] in attire, lest I should disguise myself in affection" (1.3.7-8), a direction to which Phillida assents only because, she says, "you command nothing but my safety and your happiness" (1.3.113). In this scene, then, Phillida agrees to crossdress not merely because of a patriarchal imperative, but also because she is attentive to Melibeus's fearful "affections," and eager to help him achieve his "happiness." While her boyish garb might indeed be a survival tool designed to offer her "safety," Phillida makes clear in these lines that it is just as much a device for managing the affects of others.

Indeed, while Phillida agrees to aid Melibeus in his search for happiness without objection, she is much more circumspect about her father's claims that crossdressing will bring her "safety." She opines that boy's clothes "will neither become my body nor my mind" (1.3.16), a phrase that points toward the perceived physical and mental (and, as the play later makes clear, emotional) incommensurability of Phillida's femaleness and the "attire" in which she is to "disguise" herself. Crossdressing, she tells her father, is a difficult—and potentially dangerous—activity.[341] But the difficulties and dangers of crossdressing are apparently less important to

[341] In a forthcoming essay that was originally delivered as a plenary address at the 2018 meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America, Sawyer Kemp argues that a focus on the clothes a character wears has actually forestalled consideration of trans identity. "The study of transvestism" in early modern drama, they write, is "concerned primarily with clothing, not identity." Such scholarship and the contemporary dramaturgical practices that draw on it have thus, they argue, positioned "living, non-fictional, self-identified trans people" in "both a privileged and completely disposable relationship to the bard." Taking into account the experiences of trans people, then, can allow us to better understand Phillida and Galatea's affects concerning their attempts to pass as men—not merely an issue of clothing, but also of behavior and self-understanding—since, as Kemp writes, "If you go to any internet forum for

Melibeus than the potential difficulties and dangers of "disguis[ing]" his "affections," of reorienting his own affective interpretations of the predicament in which he and Phillida find themselves. Though Galatea and Phillida certainly learn in their opening scenes about the ecological disaster that awaits their home and that they must disguise themselves as boys to avoid their own sacrifice, what critics have yet to recognize about these scenes is that Phillida and Galatea also learn that interpreting and responding to the affects of the men around them is a survival skill at least as important as crossdressing.[342]

When Galatea and Phillida first meet in Act 2, for instance, Galatea does indeed chide herself for not performing adequately as a boy, but she is specifically concerned with what it means to *feel* like a boy. "Blush," she tells herself, "frame thy affection fit for thy habit" (2.1.1-2). Unable to "dissemble this deceit" because of her "tender years" (2.1.3-4), Galatea turns to Phillida as a pedagogical model. "But whist," she says, "here cometh a lad. I will learn of him how to behave myself" (2.1.12-13). While the audience may delight in the fact that there is, within the world of a play, a lady within that "lad," the first act's pedagogy of negative affects, its insistence that learning to understand and manage affects is serious business, undergirds this scene as well. Galatea, after all, takes on her father's fear when she turns from Phillida and notes in an aside that "I would salute him, but I fear I should make a curtsy instead of a leg" (2.1.25-26). And in addition to her anxiety that she will act the part of a boy incorrectly, she also fears that her affects will manifest themselves on her body in the form of a blush if Phillida is to ask

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trans people, you will find people talking to each other about how to transition—practically, legally, socially—and pages and pages devoted to passing. What this should suggest is not that passing is mandatory, but rather that it is *hard*." Passing is, for Phillida and Galatea both, indeed hard, both practically and emotionally.

[342] Though her primary focus is not on sexuality per se, Elizabeth Mathie has recently argued that Galatea undermines the normativizing and hierarchizing procedures of humanist pedagogical methods, since the play "shows how love can usher in realisations of similarity, blurring rather than reasserting difference, and thus undermining the authority of instructors who sought after obedience as much as affection" (Mathie 176).

her if she is a "maid," a question that is simultaneously about gender identity (are you a girl?) and sexuality (are you a virgin?).

But despite Galatea's fears of being unable to successfully perform the affects and effects of boys, she nevertheless emerges in these first two acts as an incredibly astute affective interpreter of men and boys. Alone on stage for the first time, she immediately reflects on the affects that have driven her father to disguise her as a boy. "Thy father doteth, Galatea," she says to herself, "whose blind love corrupteth his fond judgment, and, jealous of thy death, seemeth to dote on thy beauty." This "blind love" not only corrupts Tityrus's judgment, but also obscures his sight, both literally and metaphorically giving him a "partial eye" (2.1.6-9). Where Celia's affective literacy emerged in those moments when she attempted to teach Rosalind to feel differently, here Lyly uses the aside to explicitly dramatize Galatea's thought process about her father's affects. What Shakespeare asks the spectator to imagine, Lyly asks them to witness.

Galatea's affective literacy is not limited only to characters who are offstage. When Phillida enters the scene and, in her own attempt to be a boy, sighs "Oh, Phillida!" (2.1.17)—feigning, perhaps, a boyish lovesickness for a woman who just happens to bear her own name—Galatea turns to the audience to reflect on this newcomer's emotional state. "I perceive," she says, "that boys are in as great disliking of themselves as maids" (2.1.18-19). Much like Celia's "herein I see," the word "perceive" marks this moment as pedagogical: Galatea learns something about boys' feelings and self-attachments as she watches Phillida. This affective pedagogy simultaneously registers Phillida's performance of negative affect and Galatea's personal history of negative affect—a history that she associates specifically with her gender, since both "maids" and "boys" seem, in her view, to not like themselves very much. She goes on to reflect on this negative affect, remarking that "though I wear the apparel" of a boy, "I am glad I am not the

person" (2.1.19-20). This meta-affective interpretation—meta-affective because it is an interpretation of Phillida's negative affect that comes in the form of its own affect, gladness—undermines the gendered division of the analogy Galatea had just posed, since her gladness suggests that perhaps boys are not "in as great disliking of themselves as maids," but are, in fact, in a *greater* disliking. Even as Galatea is, to be sure, concerned with the performance of her feigned gender identity, this comment offers gender not as her primary object of interest, but as a secondary frame within which particular affects—her primary interest—are shaped. Much more than her particular gender performance, this moment reinforces affective literacy as one of Galatea's key characterological traits.

Even at the level of the word, *Galatea* is fundamentally concerned not merely with gender, but with the ways in which gender structures affect. Linguistically, the play is structured around the relationship between "fear" and the gendered (and implicitly racialized) term "fair." The word "fair," as a synonym for beauty, and its morphological kin (e.g. "fairest") occur 62 times in the play; the word "fear" and its morphological kin (e.g. "fearful") occur 24. This quantitative difference is significant, of course, but given their phonic and morphological similarities, their frequent proximity, and their thematic centrality—it's the fair that causes the fear that drives the play—these two words form one of the lexical and conceptual foundations of Lyly's play.

Galatea and Phillida's gender performances as women cause their fathers to fear and to press them towards boyhood, a performance that causes them to fear themselves. The audience is taught to hear this relationship—the echoes of fear in fair, and fair in fear—early in the play when Melibeus first appears and says to his daughter: "Come, Phillida, fair Phillida, and I fear me too fair" (1.3.1). Galatea will soon after collocate fair and fear when she first declares her

love for Phillida (who has taken her father's name): "O fair Melibeus! Ay, too fair, and therefore, I fear, too proud!" (2.4.3-4).

Though this lament comes just after Galatea opines that "having put on the apparel of a boy [she can] not also put on the mind," her fear that Phillida/Melibeus is "too proud" suggests otherwise. Much as Celia's reactions to Rosalind revealed fault lines in her affect theories, here Galatea's collocation of "fear" and "fair" leads her to conjecture about Phillida's understanding of herself, and about her sexual attachments; Galatea fears, that is, that Phillida is "too proud," because she knows how beautiful she is, and thus would not, Galatea assumes, desire the awkwardly boyish Galatea. While she may not "put on the mind" of a boy in the sense of performing what she takes to be masculine affective and sexual scripts, Galatea can "put on the mind" of a boy in the sense of deducing what Phillida is thinking based on her outward appearance.[343] This deduction relies on the conceptual and social power of "fair"—a word that marks a superlative performance of gendered beauty, even as it attaches itself just as easily to Phillida-the-girl as it does to "Melibeus"-the-boy.

This fear/fair relationship is so fundamental to *Galatea* that there are only two scenes in which neither word appears: 3.4 and 5.1. Both of these scenes feature Rafe, the shipwrecked miller's son who roams about Lincolnshire over the course of a year attempting to learn various cosmological trades. Nonetheless, even in these two scenes, the phonic structure of fair/fear appears in the form of the words "farewell" and, more obliquely, in the off-rhyme of "fires" (5.1.3). The "farewell" and "well fare" (5.1.3) of these scenes reemerges in the mouth of Hebe, the not-fair-enough virgin who is chosen to be sacrificed to Agar. Preparing herself to be

[343] Philosophers and cognitive scientists call this "mindreading." For a recent study of mindreading in early modern, and especially Shakespearean, literature, see Helms.

sacrificed, Hebe breaks into an anaphoric lamentation. “Farewell,” she says, to “the sweet delights of life,” and “farewell you chaste virgins,” and “farewell to all the joys,” and “Farewell the pomp of princes’ courts,” and “farewell the sovereign of all virtues,” and “farewell sweet parents,” and “farewell world, thou viler monster,” (5.2.25-58)—a series of “farewells” that, in its consistent reference to affects (“delights”; “joys”; and, to some extent, “sweet”) conjoins the play’s obsession with the fear in fair and the fair in fear.

Though Melibeus and Tityrus do exhibit a degree of affective literacy, it is almost always the women in *Galatea* who are the most attuned to the importance of affect. In addition to Galatea, Phillida, and Hebe, Diana’s nymphs also pay special attention to affect, since we learn early on that they “delight” in order to not “fear” (1.2.26-28). Later, when Diana first encounters Galatea and Phillida, she immediately perceives that Galatea is “an unhappy boy” (2.1.40). All of these women, both human and nymph, are virgins. This virginal status—at once a social position and phenomenological state (not to mention a purported physiological state) —is consistently linked to these women’s affective conjectures. For instance, Hebe’s many “affections” (5.2.29)—misery (5.2.7, 5.2.47), happiness (5.2.8, 5.2.45), woe (5.2.25), delight (5.2.26), enjoyment and joy (5.2.29, 5.2.33, 5.2.65), sorrow (5.2.46), and unhappiness (5.2.66)—are frequently linked to her imagining of the life of “chaste virgins” (5.2.27) who are nevertheless allowed to “enjoy, and long enjoy” the fullness of a sensual and sexual life, “the pleasure of your curled locks, the amiableness of your wished looks, the sweetness of your tuned voices, the content of your inward thoughts, the pomp of your outward shows” (5.2.29-32).

Much like Galatea’s fear that Phillida is “too proud” to be romantically interested in her, this imaginative inhabiting of the “inward thoughts” that is prompted by the “outward shows” of “chaste virgins” is precisely what Phillida and Galatea do throughout the play. When they flirt

with each other in Act 4, for instance, they do so in the terms of "fair" and "fear" that are the Lylyian hallmarks of the virgin. The "outward shows" of "fair" serve as entry points into the "inward thoughts" of fear. "I marvel what virgin the people will present," Phillida muses, and then continues: "It is happy you are none, for then it would have fallen to your lot, because you are so fair." Galatea responds: "If you had been a maiden too, I need not have feared, because you are fairer" (4.4.1-5). This nexus of fair virginal fear leads Phillida to conjecture about a sad affective future, "a melancholy life," should she be separated from Galatea (4.4.48), an imaginative act that sets the affective backdrop of their next appearance in Act 5, where they incessantly volley back and forth their "fear" (5.3.4-8) about their future should Neptune seek revenge on the town. Though Tityrus has taught her that it "incurreth danger to conjecture" (1.1.61), and though Galatea "cannot conjecture the cause" of Neptune's rejection of Hebe (5.3.4), she and Phillida have spent the entirety of the play conjecturing about affective causes and imagining affective effects as they attach themselves to each other and learn to feel how the other girl feels.

Though Rafe is the only one to state explicitly that he "live[s] by imagination" (5.1.37), it is clear throughout the play that imagination and conjecture—whether about the current affective states of others, or about possible futures—are the primary sexual-affective *modi operandi* of practically every character. When Galatea and Phillida flirt in Act 3, for instance, they do so entirely in the subjunctive. "Suppose I were a virgin," Phillida instructs Galatea (3.2.20), initiating a series of subjunctive suppositions and conjectures. Galatea picks up that subjunctive "suppose" as she responds: "Admit that I were as you would have me suppose that you are" (3.2.26-27). In the mouth of a schoolboy playing a young woman, these verbal gymnastics are comic: Galatea both is the virgin that she would have Phillida "admit that [she] where," and,

since she is played by a boy, not exactly "as" Phillida asks her to suppose she is. But even as they may be played to comic effect, these lines are also symptomatic of the larger subjunctive logic of this play. Phillida asks Galatea to suppose, and Galatea asks Phillida to suppose on top of that supposition: they each string out imagined scenarios in which the other either is or is not constituted as a sanctioned object of desire, and thus in which their individually held notions of gender and sexuality are simultaneously cited and revised.

But even as it seems as if these subjunctive love games are meant to determine the gender of the other character—both Galatea's and Phillida's asides in which they "fear the boy to be as I am, a maiden" (3.2.34-35) suggest as much—the scene ultimately ends with both characters deciding that the other character's gender doesn't really matter. "Can you prefer a fond boy, as I am, before so fair ladies, as they are?" Phillida asks. Galatea responds: "Why should not I as well as you?" (3.2.61-63). Why should not I, a boy-girl, prefer a boy-girl as you prefer a boy-girl? The criss-crossing of gender knowledges in these lines, where each character seems to have both determined that the other is "really" a girl, and yet both seems to have decided they do not care, suggests that the determination of the gender identity of their partner is less important to them than the knowledge that each "prefer[s]" the other. They may not be able to "tell what to think of one another," but they can nevertheless "make much of one another" (3.2.64-66) in the forest, an act that, as Traub has argued, is pointedly sexual.[344] Even in the play's final scene, where Galatea and Phillida are each unveiled as women, their lament of the "sour deceit" (5.3.131) of having thought the other to be a boy is immediately tossed aside to make way for declarations of undying love: "I will never love any but Phillida," Galatea says. "Nor I any but Galatea," Phillida responds (5.3.135-137). This mutual love overrides all concern with gender identity,

[344] Traub, *Renaissance*, 6.

such that when Venus declares that she will change one of them into a man, but that "neither of them shall know whose lot it shall be till they come to the church door," both Galatea and Phillida immediately consent (5.3.184-185).

More important than the "truth" of a particular gender identity for Galatea and Phillida are the affects that accompany the various gendered performances they are asked to give. As each attempts to "suppose" what the other may be, the fear that structures this play follows along: "What doubtful speeches be these," Phillida remarks in an aside, "I fear me he is as I am, a maiden." Galatea, too, finds this possibility affecting: "What dread riseth in my mind! I fear me he is as I am, a maiden," she says (3.2.32-35). To be sure, in these lines both Galatea and Phillida are clearly concerned with the other's gender identity; but a focus on the "maiden" in these lines can serve to obscure the conditions and practices through which this concern emerges for each character. Especially given the girls' final disregard for who will be subject to Venus's imposed gender transition, the "fear" and "dread" that structure these characters' thoughts can reveal more about what Lyly and his audience would have assumed about the ordinary practice of intimacy—of what it feels like to desire another, and to wonder if they also desire you—than can a focus on the girl's search for each other's gender.

In this scene, and throughout the play, the management of affect occurs not merely through the possibilities of the subjunctive mood, but more specifically through conjecturing about another character's sex life. As Galatea and Phillida continue to feel each other out in this scene, each turns to an imagination of the other's ongoing affective engagements with desire. Noting that Diana's nymphs have fallen for Phillida but that she has turned them all away, Galatea conjectures that this is so because Phillida is "too proud, to disdain, or too childish, not to understand, or for that he knoweth himself to be a virgin" (3.2.50-52). In much the same vein,

Phillida notes that Galatea has rejected the advances of Diana's nymphs perhaps "knowing too well the beauty of his own face, or that himself is of the same mould" (3.2.54-55). Though each character notes that the possibility that the other's rejection of the nymphs may be due to their gender identity—that they are either "a virgin" or made "of the same mould" as the nymphs—they do so as part of a larger conjecture about the other character's assumptions about sex. Perhaps, Phillida imagines, Galatea is too proud of herself—perhaps she holds herself, sexually, in too high esteem to couple with one of the nymphs. Or perhaps she simply doesn't know enough about sex to even understand the advances of the nymphs—perhaps she is too young to have developed a concept of sex and desire. Galatea, too, imagines that Phillida might turn away from Diana's band because she thinks she is so beautiful that she deserves a much more attractive partner.

Even as Galatea and Phillida have spent much of the scene "fear[ing]" that the other might, in fact, be a girl, it is these conjectures about how the other character understands sex and sexuality—and conjectures about what it is, sexually, the other might want—that provide the ultimate catalyst for Galatea and Phillida to "make much of one another" (3.2.64-65). Thus, imagining the other character's sex life—their ongoing engagement with sex, here in the form of a rejection of the advances of the nymphs—is precisely what allows Galatea and Phillida to become sexually involved themselves. They may, as Cupid claims the nymphs will, "dote in their desires, delight in their affections, and practise only impossibilities" (2.2.8-10), but this doting, delight, and practicing are, crucially, not mere abstractions, but actual actions that Galatea and Phillida take in the form of subjunctive conjectures about the sex lives of others.

As was the case with Rosalind and Celia, conjecturing about the affects other characters attach to sexual acts and desires is difficult work for Phillida and Galatea. Even understanding

one's own affects, as Phillida notes, is difficult, since she curses the "untamedness" of her own "affections" (2.5.3). Diana's nymphs also find their affects difficult to understand and control. Immediately after Phillida complains of her wild affections, Telusa enters the stage and wonders "what new conceits, what strange contraries, breed in [her] mind" (3.2.2-3). Wondering if she should "follow the hot desire of love," she laments in the second person that "these words are unfit for thy sex, being a virgin, but apt for thy affections, being a lover" (3.1.6-8). Where the "unaptness" of Phillida's boyish disguise led her to lament the "untamedness" of her affective attachment to Galatea, Telusa's attachment to Phillida makes her into "a lover," and thus renders her affects "apt." From the girls dressed as boys to the nymphs who fall in love with them, the female characters in this play are consistently concerned with managing their sexual affects—with, that is, making themselves "apt" for the situation in which they find themselves. Simone Chess has argued that *Galatea* is "less about any one fixed sexual identity or attraction, and more about the partnered project of creating and maintaining gender."[345] Galatea's and Phillida's conjectures about each other serve not to uncover, but to construct each other's gender identity, she argues, and thus constitute what she calls "gender labour." This gender labor, I would suggest, is also affective labor, since the female characters in this play consistently construct and interpret their own sex lives via ongoing attempts to both conjecture about the affects and sex lives of others, and attempt to render their own affects and sex lives "apt" for the predicaments in which they find themselves.

[345] Chess, 146.

Conclusion

Specific erotic and hermeneutic practices fundamentally shape the lives of the characters in the plays I have analyzed. Celia gives up her livelihood to follow Rosalind into the forest, and then—after finally coming to terms with the fact that Rosalind lacks the affective literacy to reciprocate her feelings—ultimately marries a man for whom, for all the audience knows, she has no affection at all. Galatea and Phillida escape a watery death by managing the affects of their fathers and then craft their affective and erotic lives by conjecturing about the affects of the "boy" to whom each finds herself attached. In each case, these characters move through their fictional worlds by testing out affect theories and conjecturing about the emotional lives of others. Even Rosalind, oblivious as she can be to Celia's affections, is centrally invested in the affects of her male love object. What Denise Walen lays out in her study of female "homoeroticism" on the early modern stage as a generic requirement of drama—that "the spectator" should act "as the creator of narrative signification"—is played out within the plays themselves as a generic requirement of living.[346]

Just as one of the compilers of *Aristotle's Masterpiece* saw in Thomas Carew's "A Rapture" a logistical script for living a sexual life, as I discuss in the first chapter, so too might early modern audiences have seen in *Galatea* and *As You Like It*, for all of their pastoral distance from early modern London, ways of being in the world that mirrored their own—or, perhaps, ways of being that opened out onto newly imagined queer worlds. One of the primary reasons that Shakespeare's plays have remained so popular for four centuries is that his characters seem to respond to each other in ways that imply interior, affective lives and thought processes. And despite often being labeled as "didactic," Lyly's play partakes of—and, insofar as it precedes, in

[346] Walen, "Constructions," 412.

fact produces—the same sorts of dramatic characterizations as Shakespeare's. Situating the "lives" of these characters into the framework of various early modern ideologies, institutions, and discursive frames is a vital scholarly project. But it is not the only way to go about coming to an "historical" understanding of these plays. By asking what the language of the plays suggests about what a particular character takes for granted about the affects of sexual relations, I have offered an entryway into historical sexual relations that does not take discursively "situating" sex as a macro-level phenomenon as its primary goal. As the emphasis on the stakes of feeling—and feeling how another is feeling—in these plays makes clear, the affective assumptions of particular characters, their ongoing revision of various "affect theories," constitute an essential meso-level part of quotidian sexual experience.

The meso-level of such characters' attempts to construct their sex lives is difficult to access by recourse to concepts like "homoeroticism." The emphasis that considerations of "homoeroticism" have placed on the social signification of the homo has obscured meso-level sexual practices—like the affect theories I have traced—that mediate between micro-interactions and those macro-level discursive meanings. My meso-level analysis thus is meant to encourage scholars not only to revise our readings of early modern drama, but also to explore an archive of what early modern characters, the playwrights and companies that wrote and embodied them, and the audiences that watched them took for granted about the practice of sexuality, both inside, and presumably outside, the playhouse. What's more, a focus on the dramatization of sexual affect theories might also lead scholars to reconsider the phenomenological experience of other vectors of subjectification—for instance, as I will show in my next chapter, the quotidian forms of racist affects that produce racial difference. The pedagogical love that Celia asks Rosalind to develop does not, it turns out, always teach two characters that they are "one."

Chapter Four

Traffic and Comfort: The Affects of Interracial Romance

On Christmas Eve, 1617, on a little street in London three blocks southeast of St. Paul's and just across the Thames from the Globe, a white woman named Margaret Person married a black man named James Curres in the parish church of Holy Trinity the Less. Their entry in the parish record is characteristically terse, noting only the fact of the wedlock of "James Curres, beinge a Moore Christian and Margaret Person, a maid."[347] Despite its brevity, this entry is surprisingly detailed, since the clerk took care to note Curres's conversion to Christianity and Person's virginity. We do not know the circumstances that brought Curres and Person to marry on this day, but the clerk's decision to specify that Person was a "maid"—certainly not a generic requirement of the record—suggests that, whatever may have brought these two together, it was probably not an unexpected premarital pregnancy. The entry does not specify, as some do, that this wedding was performed without the three requisite announcements, or "banns," in the preceding weeks, and so it is reasonable to assume that these banns were indeed made before the church. This marriage was, we are left to imagine, a planned affair. But who heard the marriage banns of James Curres and Margaret Person? Who attended their wedding, or saw them processing away from the church afterward? And what did they think and feel? Did they smile and nod approvingly, or did they tut and cluck their tongues, scandalized by the marriage of a white woman and a black man? These parishioners and their thoughts, feelings, and opinions

[347] Habib, 139-140.

have evaporated like the cold London drizzle that may have greeted this couple's union. All that remains is a quiet record—and thus official recognition—of Curres and Person becoming, at least legally, one.

Notably, of the thirty-nine interracial marriages in seventeenth-century London that Imtiaz Habib documents in *Black Lives in the English Archives*, this marriage between a "Moore Christian" and a "maid" is "the first record of an explicitly identified African male in an inter-racial marriage in the early modern English archives."[348] While Habib may be correct that this is the first *official* documentation of interracial marriage between a black man and a white woman in England, almost forty years earlier, in one of the most infamous moments of early modern racism, George Best documents an Elizabethan interracial marriage. Speaking of "the black Moores," Best writes:

> I myself have seen an Ethiopian as black as a coal brought into England, who taking a fair English woman to wife, begat a son in all respects as black as the father was, although England were his native country, and an English woman his mother: whereby it seemeth this blackness proceedeth rather of some natural infection of that man, which was so strong, that neither the nature of the clime, neither the good complexion of the mother concurring, could any thing alter, and therefore we cannot impute it to the nature of the clime.[349]

Best is careful here to note the specificity of this interracial marriage—"*this* blackness" and "*that* man"—but this specificity soon becomes exemplarity, since immediately after this passage he proceeds to make sweeping claims about the origins of blackness in "some natural infection of the first inhabitants" of Ethiopia. "The whole progeny of them descended," he says, "are still polluted with the same blot of infection."[350] This "infection" he attributes to the so-called "curse

[348] Habib, 140.
[349] Loomba and Burton, 108.
[350] ibid., 109.

of Ham," the biblical son of Noah who, on Best's account, contravened his father's injunction against having sexual intercourse on the ark.[351] For Best, this sexual transgression constitutes an ethnogenic theory, since God punishes Ham with a son named Chus whose posterity "should be so black and loathsome, that it might remain a spectacle of disobedience" for generations to come.[352]

Over the past three decades, Best's anecdote has become the centerpiece of literary critical discussions of early modern theories of ethnogenesis.[353] Kyle Grady has recently argued that this scholarly focus on Best's recapitulation of "the transgressive black man-white woman paradigm" has done "little on its own to enable us to think about the ways in which *white males* both engaged in interracial sex and also perpetuated narratives that downplayed or elided their participation."[354] Reading records of white men raping black women in St. Andrew's parish in Plymouth, Grady argues that "white men in early modern England were able to take sexual advantage of black women, and they were able to do so in a way that garnered nothing of the fascination, interest, and attention with which Best approaches the black man-white woman

[351] Though Best's attribution of blackness to the curse of Ham is exemplary of a larger early modern discourse—the curse was such a popular ethnogenic theory that John Bulwer would write in his *Anthropometamorphosis* (1650) that it was one of "the causes [of blackness] generally received" (Loomba and Burton 245)—he is somewhat peculiar in claiming that Ham's transgression was sleeping with his wife against his father's wishes. More common was the story, as it is recounted in the Geneva Bible (1560), that "Ham the father of Canáan sawe the nakedness of his father" who "was dronke*n*, & was vncouered in th*e* middes of his tent." (Genesis 9:21-22). In both versions of the story, though, Ham's transgression is a pointedly sexual transgression. In their reading of Richard Jobson's invocation of the curse in *The golden trade* (1623) Loomba and Burton argue that "whereas older versions of the story linked the curse to both blackness and servitude, as Africans began to be enslaved and to be viewed as a self-replenishing commodity, newer writings began to connect Noah's curse with African hypersexuality and fecundity" (18).

[352] Loomba and Burton, 109.

[353] It is taken up by, among others, Boose ("Getting" 44)**,** Floyd-Wilson (*English Ethnicity* 8-9), Grady (*Moors* 183-190), Habib (101-104), Hall (*Things of Darkness*, 11-13), Iyengar (*Shades* 8-9), Neill (*Putting History* 276), and Newman ("'And Wash the Ethiop White'" 79).

[354] Grady, *Moors*, 189. For more on the "transgressive black man-white woman paradigm," and specifically the trope of black men raping white women, see Little, *Shakespeare Jungle Fever*; Hall, *Things of Darkness*; Boose, "Getting"; and Grady's discussion of *Titus Andronicus* in *Moors*.

relationship."[355] "Insomuch as anecdotes like Best's are complicit with the routines of the dominant culture," he claims, "they only lead us further astray."[356]

Keeping in mind Grady's caution about the reproduction of Best's racism, I here attempt to read Best against himself.[357] Despite himself, Best does record the possibility of a consensual interracial relationship, since he does not claim that the "Ethiopian" assaulted the "fair English woman," but that instead he took her "to wife." But since Best is primarily interested in accounting for the blackness of the biracial baby, the possible courtship that lies behind the phrase "taking a fair English woman to wife" goes unremarked upon. Who knows what this couple saw in each other, and how they felt, moving through a white world as an interracial couple, surveilled by friends, family members, neighbors, passersby? Whatever they felt, their story would repeat itself nearly forty years later on that December day in Holy Trinity the Less, each character taking on the specificity of a name—James Curres and Margaret Person—and either a racial-religious ("Moore Christian") or sexual ("maid") epithet. In neither Best's anecdote nor the parish record, though, are we offered the affective and logistical negotiations that produced these marriages and, at least in one case, a child.

As I argued in the previous chapter, drama is a particularly fecund genre for accessing these sorts of affective negotiations (even if it sometimes falls short of offering the logistical

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[355] Grady, *Moors*, 193.

[356] Grady, *Moors*, 193.

[357] Though I agree wholeheartedly with her reading of the ideology of Best's anecdote, I disagree with Kim Hall's claim that it "is less important for its evidence that there was racial intermarriage in England than for its articulation of the cultural anxieties . . . brought out by the presence of blacks" (*Things of Darkness* 11). To my mind, Best's citation of this interracial marriage is key to understanding the lived experience of those very cultural anxieties. Lynda Boose comes closest to offering an account of the English wife when she argues that "it is crucial to note that Best's initial description of the Ethiopian having taken a 'faire English woman to wife' was itself free of the animus usually attached to racism" ("Getting" 44). But even as it seems that the English woman may not have held the "animus usually attached to racism," I remain unconvinced that "Best's initial description" is "free" from such animus.

negotiations that I tracked across poetry, pornography, and closet drama in the first two chapters). Thus, in order to more fully account for the affects that surround the interracial marriages with which I began this chapter, I turn to John Fletcher's stageplay *The Island Princess*, first performed privately before the King and court at Whitehall in 1621, then later likely performed publicly at the Globe and Blackfriars, and finally printed in the 1647 Beaumont and Fletcher folio.[358] Drawing on Spanish and French accounts of the Malukan "spice islands," Fletcher's play stages the attempts of a group of Portuguese venturers to win the hand of Quisara, the titular island princess, by rescuing her brother, the King of Tidore, from the prison of his rival, the Governor of Ternate.[359] Though Quisara originally chooses the Portuguese leader Rui Dias to save her brother, and thus to be her lover, a Portuguese newcomer, Armusia, swoops in and sets fire to Ternate in order to release the King from captivity. Reluctant to marry this stranger, Quisara demands that Armusia convert to Islam, a request that sends him into a rage and into a virulent Islamophobic screed. Disguised as a "Moor priest" and determined to overthrow the Tidorean state, the Governor of Ternate convinces the King of Tidore that Armusia's refusal to convert is proof that he is dangerous, and so Armusia finds himself imprisoned by the very man he had just rescued. Quisara, taken with Armusia's bravery, decides to convert to Christianity to be with him. And thus the play ends with the Governor exposed;

[358] For the performance and publication history of the play, see McManus's introduction to her Arden edition. All my citations of the play are from this edition. Except when quoting from other scholars—who largely work from Fredson Bowers's Cambridge edition—I follow McManus's spellings of character names, e.g. "Pinheiro" instead of "Pyniero."

[359] I use the word "venturer" to describe the Portuguese characters in this play because the European relationship with east Asians and Indonesians in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was largely one of mutually beneficial trade, even if it was limned with the possibilities of violence on either side. The early modern use of the word "venturer" combines these economic and violent valences—in early modern dictionaries it is variously associated with piracy (Palsgrave's 1530 *Lesclarcissement de la Langue Francoyse*), war (L.H.'s 1571 *Dictionary French and English*), and merchants (Cotgrave's 1611 *Dictionary of the French and English Tongues*)—with a sexual valence. One of the Portuguese venturers in *The Island Princess*, Pinheiro, describes visiting prostitutes ("wenching") as a type of venture: "I ventured on still easily / And took my chance" with the sex workers, he says, since "danger is a soldier's honour" (1.1.100-101).

Quisara betrothed to Armusia; the Malukans "half persuaded" to convert to Christianity (5.5.67); and the Portuguese in control of the islands.

The Island Princess has recently emerged as a key site of critical inquiry into racial difference, religious conversion, colonial fantasy, and what Carmen Nocentelli has called "the ideology of interracial romance."[360] According to Nocentelli, Fletcher's play was "the most successful interracial romance of the early modern period," and its "fortunes . . . coincided almost exactly with the establishment and consolidation of what has come to be known as the first British Empire."[361] Where Ania Loomba argues that "the play offers a fantasy of colonial and sexual possession,"[362] I linger over the meso-level affects that attend such a fantasy, tracing what Ann Laura Stoler has called the "affective grid of colonial politics."[363] Reading the play not for the *ideology* of interracial romance but for the *phenomenology* of interracial romance, I argue that *The Island Princess* dramatizes for its English audience the affective negotiations through which gender, race, and sexuality are lived—the very affective negotiations that lie silently behind the interracial marriages recorded by Best and the anonymous parish clerk.

The Racial Subjunctive

From the start of the play, the Portuguese venturers Pinheiro and Cristófero are quick to praise Quisara. Because of her social status, Pinheiro argues, Quisara is as beautiful as a white ("fair") European woman. She "must be fair," he says, since "that's the prerogative of being royal" (1.1.45-46). And yet, Pinheiro's attribution of Quisara's whiteness to her class is belied by

[360] Nocentelli, 115.
[361] ibid., 119.
[362] Loomba, "Break her will," 68.
[363] Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge*, 7.

his denigration of her brother, the King of Tidore, who had recently been captured by his rival while rowing a boat through the strait that separates their islands. When Cristófero asks "how such poor and base pleasures / As tugging at an oar or skill in steerage / Should become princes" (1.1.16-18), Pinheiro replies that "base breedings love base pleasure" (1.1.18). Though they claim that Quisara's whiteness is "the prerogative of being royal," the King—presumably no less royal than his sister—is offered no such prerogative. He and his pleasures are, instead, "poor and base," "slavish," "dull" and unbecoming of "a gentleman" (1.1.18-23).

It seems clear, then, that Quisara's racialization is driven not only by her class but also by her gender. It is not that she is "fair" because she is "royal," but that she is fair because she is a royal *woman*. And though Pinheiro and Cristófero begin the play with a series of puns denigrating the King's supposed sexual proclivities—he both rows and steers a "scurvy" boat, but he also masturbates ("tugging at an oar")[364] and knows how to pleasure his lover, since he "row[s] her tightly / And [has] the art to turn and wind her nimbly" (1.1.20-21)—they immediately proceed to articulate and valorize their own sexual desires for Quisara. Just like "all the neighbour princes" who "are mad for" Quisara (1.1.50), Pinheiro and Cristófero pine after her. "Would I were worth her looking!" Cristófero sighs, "For, by my life, I hold her a complete one" (1.1.59-60).

And it is not merely men who are in love with Quisara; the entire cosmos apparently bends to her grace. "The very sun, I think," Cristófero says, "affects her sweetness / And dares not, as he does to all else, dye it / Into his tawny livery" (1.1.61-63). For Cristófero, Quisara's whiteness is set in contradistinction to the brownness, the "tawny livery," of the other Malukans,

[364] McManus also reads the sexual pun in this line, since she claims in her gloss that "the European noblemen find the Malukans' pleasure in physical labour and sex dishonourable" (106).

the "all else" who are, like their King, "base."[365] But Quisara's racial distinction is the product of a tautology: she is "great," "beauteous," "complete," and "sweet" because she is "fair," but she is also "fair" because she is so "great," "beauteous," "complete," and "sweet" (1.1.29-60). Clearly, the Portuguese racialization of the Malukans is anything but coherent, since different Malukans are racialized differently not only depending on their gender, but also—since Quisara is also distinguished from other Malukan women in that "all else"—depending on how any given Portuguese venturer feels about them at any given moment.

In this opening scene, Fletcher dramatizes not a programmatic "fantasy of colonial and sexual possession,"[366] but the quotidian desires of Portuguese venturers who seem to possess very little—desires which both produce and are produced by self-contradictory notions of race, gender, class, and sexuality. This lack of possession, this lack of colonial power and ownership, is inscribed in Cristófero's recourse to the subjunctive mood of "*Would* I *were* worth her looking!" (1.1.59, emphasis mine) and in the conjecture of "The very sun, *I think*, affects her sweetness" (1.1.61, emphasis mine). It seems clear from his wish that he "were worth her looking" that it is not merely the sun but also Cristófero who "affects [Quisara's] sweetness." Indeed, the primary function of Cristófero's subjunctive seems to be the articulation of the affects—the "interpretation[s] of predicaments," in Rei Terada's terms—that surround his desire for Quisara.[367] His "would" and "were" pose his claim of "worth" in affective terms, since they both interpret a present state of affective exclusion (he doesn't *feel* worth her looking, apparently) and imagine a future state of happiness. What Fletcher dramatizes in this moment is

[365] This is pointedly different than George Best's claim that "in the Ilands Moluccae the people are not blacke, but tauney and white" (Best 28). Though Fletcher and Best use the same word—tawny—to describe the Malukans, it is clear in *The Island Princess* that, even though it is certainly not equivalent with "blacke," tawny does not collocate with "white."

[366] Loomba, "Break her will," 68.

[367] Terada, 57

less fantasy and more *fantasizing*, the process of producing and cathecting fantasies. The audience is asked to watch Cristófero fantasize about Quisara, and to understand that this fantasizing—this process of conjecture about and wish for a future affective state—serves to racialize Quisara, to mark her as "fair" not because she is royal, but because she is desired.

Nocentelli has convincingly argued that interracial romances like *The Island Princes* performed pedagogical work on the early modern English stage:

> Reflecting and reformulating the experience of the contact zone for home consumption, they taught European men and women what and how to desire—that is, how to perform and distribute affect in ways that were both gender specific and racially appropriate. It is not that Europeans consciously learned these lessons, or that it became impossible for them to ignore or discard the message. Although interracial romances certainly provided templates of behavior, their primary effect was to delimit the range of acts, desires, and affects that could be legitimately available within Europe.[368]

In the case of Fletcher's play, part of this affective-pedagogical work is dramaturgical. Fletcher opens the play with two Portuguese characters—characters both distant from, in their Catholicism, the Protestant English and, in their whiteness, proximate to them—conjecturing about the sex lives of the Malukans, fantasizing about the possibility of future sexual involvements with them, and in so doing explicitly racializing them. By foregrounding the acts of conjecturing, fantasizing, and racializing, Fletcher teaches the audience to interpret this play's characters not as emblems of ideology, as (despite her claims about affect and behavior) Nocentelli does, but as active interpreters of their situations—as thinkers and feelers whose thoughts and feelings, because they are fundamentally subjunctive, are always subject to revision as they are articulated and passed between the characters.

While Nocentelli's focus on the "ideology of interracial romance" in the play illuminates

[368] Nocentelli, 119.

the circumscription of "the range of acts, desires, and affects that could be *legitimately available* within Europe," a focus on the phenomenological interactions of the play's characters—the various transactions of knowledge and affect that they perform on stage—revivifies her parenthetical claim that "interracial romances . . . provided templates of behavior." Fletcher's dramatization of affective and epistemological acts like conjecturing and fantasizing—acts which require the audience to, in effect, witness the characters imagining—encourages spectators to see these characters as "templates of behavior," and to actively practice those very behaviors, those conjectures and fantasizings, in the playhouse. Thus, Fletcher's play offers one model for understanding the quotidian construction of race and sexuality in early modern England. Watching Cristófero's racializing and sexualizing subjunctive, early modern spectators learned to understand sex and race as intermingled affect theories of attachment.

The "Practic Art" of Quotidian Sexual-Racialization

While Cristófero's early sexual-racialization of Quisara is dramatically and conceptually foundational to the play, it is Pinheiro who emerges as a key dramatic ballast for the rest of the play's shifting plotlines. Shankar Raman has noted that Pinheiro functions as a hermeneutical figure who, "through close observation" attempts to "eschew 'strange outsides' and to see through 'cunning shadowes.'"[369] This leads Pinheiro to be, in the final act, the one who unveils the Governor of Ternate, the Malukan who first imprisons the King of Tidore and then, throughout the second half of the play, disguises himself as a "Moor Priest" (4.1) in order to turn the King and Quisara against the Portuguese. "The conclusive gesture of the production of

[369] Raman, 186.

colonial knowledge," Raman argues, "is Pyniero's final unmasking, which reveals the Governor in the place of the 'blinde prophet.' By pulling off the [Governor's fake] beard and hair, Pyniero represents for the audience the power of colonial vision."[370] While this may be true at the level of the play's ideological closure, the majority of the play represents Pinheiro not as an agent of "colonial vision" but as a quotidian interpreter of the phenomenology of sex. Much as it was for Galatea and Phillida in *Galatea,* conjecturing and fantasizing about other people's sex lives is, in fact, the primary dramatic function of Pinheiro's character.

For instance, after Armusia has beat out Rui Dias and rescued the King of Tidore, the other Portuguese discuss this newcomer's unexpected triumph. When Cristófero suggests that it is a "shame" that Armusia has won out over Rui Dias because Armusia is a "stranger" (2.6.65), Pinheiro, imagining Armusia's sex life, disagrees and dilates on Armusia's manliness, claiming that "he's a fellow of that speed and handsomeness / He will get her with child, too, ere you shall come to know him" (2.6.69-70). Here, Pinheiro conjectures about the future sex Armusia will have with Quisara, since he supposedly "will get her with child" faster than Rui Dias could even meet him. And because Pinheiro has already established that the racial-national category of "Portuguese" is intimately bound up with sexual potency—he claims in the play's first scene that Rui Dias "would stand stiffly: he is no Portugal else" (1.1.87)—his conjectures about Armusia's sex life are also claims about his race.[371] For Cristófero, Armusia is a "stranger" even though he is Portuguese—he is, as Carmen Nocentelli notes, "Portuguese with a difference."[372] This difference is figured as an affective subversion of the racial-sexual performance of Portuguese potency since it is, in Cristófero's words, a "shame" that Armusia has beat out Rui Dias. But

[370] ibid., 186.
[371] Ania Loomba has demonstrated that, in early modernity, "the nation is a racialized category" (*Shakespeare* 24).
[372] Nocentelli, 122. Raman further suggests that Armusia's difference allows him to stand in for the English.

Pinheiro disagrees. "'Tis no shame," he says, since Armusia is clearly so sexually potent and has "dealt like a man indeed" (2.6.65-67). Armusia's masculine performance of sexual potency—a "performance" that is purely the product of Pinheiro's conjecture—reorients the affects of the Portuguese venturers, and so reorients Armusia's racialization. When Armusia is a "shame," he is a "stranger"; but when he is the object of admiration ("a man indeed"), he is "a Portugal, / And of as good a pitch" (2.6.88-89), an epithet that simultaneously, in its suggestion of a phenotypic similitude, racializes and, in its suggestion of status, raises Armusia's class. Fletcher makes clear in the next scene that this racialization is driven primarily by affect, since even though Pinheiro and Cristófero are able to accept Armusia as "a Portugal," the jilted and angry Rui Dias still refers to him as "stranger" (3.1.43).

In his anger and despair over potentially losing Quisara to Armusia, Rui Dias goads Pinheiro into agreeing to kill Armusia. But before he will agree to this, Pinheiro decides he must speak with Quisara and be sure that she would marry Rui Dias if Armusia were out of the picture. To speak with Quisara, he must first make it through her lady-in-waiting, Panura, and her aunt, Quisana. It is in this scene that the audience is taught to revise and complicate their understanding of Pinheiro's conjectures about Armusia's sex life, since he conjectures not about other characters' sex lives, but about other characters *conjecturing about* other characters' sex lives. After a bit of repartee, for instance, Quisana finally admits that she "love[s] to hear sometimes what men think" of women (3.1.155), and specifically of the ladies-in-waiting who serve as barriers between men and their love objects. Pinheiro is happy to oblige:

> According to men's states and dignities,
> Monies and moveables, you rate their dreams
> And cast the nativity of their desires:
> If he reward well, all he thinks is prosperous
> And, if he promise place, his dreams are oracles.
> Your ancient practic art, too, in these discoveries—

> Who loves at such a length, who a span further,
> And who draws home—yields you no little profit. (3.1.158-65)

Because Pinheiro moves about the world conjecturing and fantasizing about other people's sex lives, he assumes that this is the way others move about the world as well. Women, he says, look to men's status, their "state's and dignities," and their property, their "monies and moveables," in order to imagine what it is they want, whether or not those desires are acceptable, and where those desires come from—to, that is "rate their dreams / And cast the nativity of their desires." This imagining on the part of the women is the product of a skill, a "practic art," that is "ancient" insofar as it is passed down from woman to woman. And this "art" allows them to conjecture not only about the desires of men, but also men's sexual practice—"who loves at such a length, who a span further, / And who draws home"—how long their penises are, how much stamina they may have, and who may be the most likely to bring a woman to orgasm: to "draw home."

Whether this is indeed how Panura and Quisana fantasize their way through the world, Quisana's witheringly ironic response, "Ye are cunning" (3.1.166), affirms at least the possibility of Pinheiro's interpretation. But, even more importantly, it is clear that Pinheiro is the one who has, throughout the play, employed this "ancient practic art," conjecturing about both men's and women's "states and dignities" in order to "rate their dreams." Fletcher dramatizes in Pinheiro—whether he is conjecturing about other characters' sex lives, or conjecturing about characters conjecturing about other characters' sex lives—the outward signs of a daily mental life filled with myriad theories and conjectures about the way other people relate to, and have, sex.

Drawing (to) Thought

Where the Portuguese move through this English fantasy of the contact zone conjecturing about other characters' sex lives and suddenly shifting their affects based on these conjectures, the Malukans are consistently represented as interpreting not other characters' sex lives *per se*, but other characters' affective lives in arenas that do not necessarily pertain to sex. Though the play figures racial difference variously as phenotypic, religious or gendered difference, the Malukans' skill in interpreting the affects of others emerges early in the play as a mode of racialization. Though all of the Malukans are implicitly marked as racially distinct from the Portuguese—with the important distinction of the "fair" Quisara—the two men working in the Ternatean jail that holds the King of Tidore, "1 Moor" and "2 Moor," are referred to in the text *solely* by their racial-religious difference. Aside from the racial markers of their "names," and whatever dramaturgical effects (dress, blackface, wigs, accent) that would have rendered these "names" legible to an early modern audience, these minor characters are solely defined by their thoughtful interpretations of the King's affective states.

Reading the King's resistance to the tortures he has endured in the Governor's jail, 1 Moor remarks:

> 'Tis a strange wonder:
> Which are the Governor's commands—give him nothing.
> Or so little to sustain life 'tis next nothing.
> They stir not him. He smiles upon his miseries,
> And bears 'em with such strength as if his nature
> Had been nursed up and fostered with calamities. (2.1.10-16)

Here, this jailor acts like the playhouse spectators, reading the King's body like a text and interpreting his physical resistance to starvation as evidence of an underlying affective state. Even though, 1 Moor notes, the Governor has ordered that the jailors provide the King with only

enough food "to sustain life," the King nevertheless does not "stir." Instead, "he smiles upon his miseries." These smiles suggest to the Moorish jailor the King's entire affective prehistory. He is able to endure these tortures with a smile because, apparently, he "had been nursed up and fostered with calamities"—because, that is, his affective life has taught "his nature" to endure such misfortune. This conjecture about the King's nature is similar to the women who, on Pinheiro's account, "cast the nativity" of the "desires" of men, since both are conjectures about the mental lives of other characters based on reports of their outward performances.

The jailor's ability to conjecture about the King's affective prehistory is predicated upon a well-honed affective literacy. And since this jailor is identified *only* by the sign of the "Moor," this affective literacy takes on an oversized importance in defining his character. The other jailor, "2 Moor," evinces similar affective-hermeneutic powers in his contention that, because the King "curses nor repines not," he must therefore have no "hopes" or "fears" (2.1.17-19). Since the only thing the audience learns about these two minor characters is that they are adept and thoughtful affective interpreters, and since the audience learns this about both of these characters, affective literacy seems to be key to Fletcher's conceptualization and representation of racialization in this imagined colonial space. What's more, because this scene occurs early in the play, its function is largely pedagogical. The scene is designed to teach the spectator to understand racial difference as, in part, a matter of affective literacy. These two Moor jailors set the scene, as it were, for further a enmeshment of affective hermeneutics with race and—in the case of Quisara—sexuality.

Quisara, mediating as she does between the "tawny" Malukans and the "fair" Portuguese, combines both the general affective literacies of the Moor jailers and Pinheiro's specific "practic art" of sexual conjecture. Just before Pinheiro and Cristófero taunt Rui Dias for having failed to

rescue the King, we learn that Quisara relates to Rui Dias primarily by conjecturing about his sex life, much like Pinheiro had at the play's beginning. Quisara enters the stage berating Rui Dias for his failure to save her brother. "Never tell me," she says, "you never cared to win me, / Never for my sake to attempt a deed / Might draw me to a thought you sought my favor" (2.6.1-3). The suggestion that Rui Dias's actions "might draw" Quisara "to a thought" that he "sought [her] favor" undergirds the scene that follows, placing a sexual conjecture—a conjecture, here, of what Rui Dias might *want* ("you never *cared* to win me") rather than what he might *do*, as in the case of Pinheiro's conjecture about Armusia—at the center of the scene's conceptual network. Responding to a barrage of put-downs, Rui Dias meekly responds: "Dear lady, hold me—" (2.6.9), but Quisara cuts him off before he is able to finish his sentence—presumably with some form of, as McManus suggests in her edition, "in your esteem." And yet, though he may well have intended to rebut Quisara's arguments, this interruption stands in the text as a sexual request: "hold me."

Given that the two characters speak in Quisara's bedroom and that Quisara has already established sexual and romantic intentions as the primary topic of the conversation, this truncated "hold me" indexes a racial-sexual desire that, because it does not conform to the narratives of spectacular racism that have dominated critical considerations of race and colonialism in early modernity—it hardly seems to rise to the level of "a fantasy of colonial and sexual possession"[373]—would pass invisibly under scholarly discursive radars. But precisely because it is such a quiet, and possibly even tender, moment of racial-sexualization, Rui Dias's "hold me" plea is closer to the banal, quotidian contingencies of interracial sex than more spectacular declarations of interracial desire might be. I am not claiming that Rui Dias *intends* to ask Quisara

[373] Loomba, "Break her will," 68.

to embrace him sexually or romantically, to hold him as one might hold a lover. But given the sexual context of the scene, and of their past relationship, that is indeed what he manages to ask her. Quisara's response, "I hold ye as I find ye, a faint servant" (2.6.10), acknowledges both Rui Dias's supposed intention and his actual utterance. On the one hand, Quisara's "hold" means that she considers Rui Dias to be her servant—a hierarchical reminder that, while he is a Portuguese venturer, she is royalty. On the other hand, her quip that she will hold him "as" a "faint servant" suggests that she will physically hold him as she would hold a servant—which is to say, she will not hold him.

This desire to be held is a *racial* sexualization not merely because it is an interracial desire expressed in an imagined colonial contact zone—though surely that is in itself enough to mark this as a moment of racialization—but also because Quisara expresses it in explicitly racializing terms. "I thought you Portugals had been rare wonders," she says, "men of those haughty courages and credits / That all things were confined within your promises" (2.6.14-16). Much like Pinheiro's claim that Rui Dias's sexual potency constitutes his racialization as Portuguese, Quisara claims that she had imagined Rui Dias's militaristic prowess and courage as securing both his right to her love and his Portugueseness, since she specifically marks this imagination as one of "you Portugals." But where this sexual-racialization was for Pinheiro a way of developing a concept of racial similitude, of bringing the "stranger" Armusia into the Portuguese fold, for Quisara it is a form of racial othering, of distancing herself from and placing herself above "*you* Portugals" who have ultimately "deceived" her (2.6.18).[374]

Quisara is, as we later learn, able to imagine Rui Dias's sex life because she knows how to *learn* to attach herself to others in a variety of ways. When, at the end of this scene, her

[374] For more on similitude, see Rubright.

brother presents her to Armusia as his reward for having "ventured" his rescue (2.6.10), Quisara does not refuse, even though she is taken aback by Armusia's sudden emergence into her life. "He has purchased" her, she says,

> Yet, good sir, give me leave to think—but time
> To be acquainted with his worth and person,
> To make me fit to know it. We are both strangers,
> And how we should believe so suddenly,
> Or come to fasten our affections—
> Alas, love has his complements (2.6.170-175)

Whereas Armusia has simply fallen in love with Quisara upon seeing her interact with the Governor of Ternate, Quisara is more circumspect and mindful about their arrangement. She does not refuse Armusia out of hand, but neither does she simply assent to her brother's arrangement. She asks, instead, for "leave to think," and "to be acquainted with his worth and person" so that she might construct a subjunctive picture of *who* Armusia might be in relation to her—a construction that, given her earlier conjecture about Rui Dias's sexual desires, includes in the word "person" a picture of his sex life. This "leave to think" will allow both her and Armusia to reorient their affect theories, to "fasten [their] affections" to each other, even though they "are both strangers." Though Armusia has swept into the lives of the Malukans swiftly and with no lack of bravado, he is not an unambiguously powerful European colonizer within the dramatic logic of the play, as Loomba and Nocentelli have made clear.[375] It is Quisara, the namesake of

[375] Among those critics who assume Armusia's power by privileging the ideological closure of the play, see the following: Phillip J. Finkelpearl significantly misreads the play when he claims, on the basis of her final conversion, that "Quisara is a passionate, credulous creature easily manipulated by men" (290) and that the "utterly flawless" (297) Armusia "acts boldly, makes love chastely, offers himself as a martyr for his religion, and at all times conducts himself humbly and courteously" (289). Valerie Forman also inadvertently reproduces the colonial fantasy of the play's ending when she argues that "the tragicomic—that is, prosperous—potential in the play comes from the two imprisonments it stages" without accounting for the "miseries" that the King of Tidore endures. My sense that the work, both characterological and political, of Quisara's "leave to think" is obscured by a scholarly focus on the play's ending is underwritten by Traub's claim that "the ideological work" of Shakespearean drama "is not captured by reference to the formal closure of the ending; it is equally at work in the process of the play" (*Desire and Anxiety* 19). Though I agree that the "process of the play" does a sort of "ideological work," I also want to suggest that the

the play, who is in control of this situation; and it is Quisara who deploys her highly refined skills of subjunctive racial-sexualization in order to maintain that control.

Where Quisara leverages her racial-sexual conjectural skills to maintain control of her own livelihood, other Malukan characters leverage similar skills to oppose the encroachment of the Portuguese onto their islands. For instance, late in the play, the Governor of Ternate disguises himself as a "Moor priest"—perhaps aligning himself, in costume, prop, or accent, with the Moorish jailors—and attempts to turn the King against the Portuguese by asking him to inhabit the subjunctive mood that Fletcher has, again and again, taught the audience to recognize as the mood of racial-sexualization. "Oh, son, the future aims of men—observe me— / Above their present actions and their glory, / Are to be looked at," he says, and then offers the King a method of judging those "future aims":

> The stars show many turnings,
> If you could see: mark but with my eyes, pupil.
> These men came hither, as my vision tells me,
> Poor, weather-beaten, almost lost, starved, feebled;
> Their vessels, like themselves, most miserable;
> Made a long suit for traffic and for comfort,
> To vend their children's toys, cure their diseases.
> They had their suit, they landed, and to th' rate
> Grew rich and powerful, sucked the fat and freedom
> Of this most blessed isle, taught her to tremble.
> Witness the castle here, the citadel
> They have clapped upon the neck of your Tidore—
> This happy town till that she knew these strangers—
> To check her when she's jolly. (4.1.40-55)

This brief monologue is one of the most thorough and nuanced critiques of colonialism on the early modern English stage. The Governor figures the Portuguese not as the venturers they have

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contingent phenomenological interactions that I have tracked throughout *The Island Princess* perform a quotidian politics that does not necessarily constitute a discursive "ideology."

imagined themselves to be throughout the play, but as early colonists who establish a "citadel" on Tidore in order to "check her" happiness. "These men came hither, as my vision tells me," the Governor says, situating his assessment of the Portuguese simultaneously within a completed past ("came") and the subjunctive "future aims of men" that his "vision" gives him access to. The Portuguese colonial project—one that the Governor imagines in the future perfect, the tense of the will have already happened—is driven, it seems, simultaneously by an economic imperative—they "vend their children's toys" and grow "rich and powerful"—and a variety of vulnerable affective states and attachments—they are "miserable" and seek "comfort." The Governor's monologue, then, combines a structural critique of colonialism as a set of interlocking discursive strategies (an economic *plan*, the Portuguese come "for traffic") with a phenomenological critique of the quotidian contingencies of interpersonal relations (colonial *feelings*, the Portuguese come "for comfort"). That is to say, the Governor conducts precisely the sort of analysis that I have been offering throughout this dissertation: a meso-level critique that is able to ground discursive strategies in more local, day-to-day tactics. In this particular case, and in *The Island Princess* more broadly, these tactics take the form of affects.

The Portuguese, for instance, are driven to Maluku by their misery and their desire for comfort—affective states that are at once physiological, since they are "poor," "starved," "tested," and have "diseases," and relational, since their pursuit of "comfort" violently teaches the Malukans to "tremble," to inhabit new states of fear. Importantly, the Governor's critique is not exactly that the Portuguese have done physical violence to the Malukans. Instead, the finale of his appeal to the King to turn away from the Portuguese is the affective claim that they have squelched the "happy town," leveraging the emblems of the colonial State—"the castle here, the citadel"—as tools for keeping Tidore in "check . . . when she's Jolly." And, as is the case

throughout the play, it is precisely in the moment when affect emerges that the racializing term "stranger" emerges. In Fletcher's play, race emerges in the wake of affect.

"My Better Self"

Like race, sexual desire also flows from affect in *The Island Princess*. Even though the play is driven by a series of male-female desires that construct racial logics even as they depend on them—Cristófero's and Armusia's and the Governor's desires for Quisara, say, or Quisara's desire for Rui Dias—male-male desire lines, and the affects that drive them, follow parallel tracks throughout the play. After he is rescued by Armusia, for instance, the King of Tidore seems to fall in love with him. Just before he gives Armusia away to Quisara, the King is effusive in his praise:

> But this man, princes,
> I must thank heartily indeed, and truly:
> For this man saw me in't and redeemed me;
> He looked upon me sinking and then caught me.
> This, sister, this: this all man, this all valour,
> This pious man— (2.6.126-131).

The King searches here for some word or phrase that might capture the way he sees and feels about Armusia, a feeling that seems to only be captured by the deictic force of "this." Armusia, who has "caught" the King as he sank, is "all man," a phrase that echoes Cristófero's earlier contention that Quisara is a "complete one" (1.1.60). Although they are presented as an argument for why Quisara should take up Armusia as her suitor, these lines betray the King's deeper attachment to a man who has appeared seemingly out of nowhere in order to further disrupt his already volatile kingdom. But the King sees Armusia neither as a potential trading partner, nor, as the Governor will ask him to see Armusia at the end of the play, a colonist; he sees him,

rather, as his beloved friend and love object.

Coming upon Armusia in the next act, for instance, the King gently chides him for having stayed away so long:

> Why, how now, friend?
> Why do you rob me of the company
> I love so dearly, sir? I have been seeking you:
> For when I want you, I want all my pleasure.
> Why sad, thus sad still, man? I will not have it:
> I must not see the fact I love thus shadowed. (3.2.45-50)

When he lacks Armusia, the King declares, he lacks "all [his] pleasure." Far from simply acknowledging his indebtedness to Armusia, the King has cathected Armusia so completely that Armusia has become not merely a cause of pleasure, but pleasure's synonym. His is the face that the King "loves," the face of a friend whose presence is constantly sought, and whose affect must be tended to.[376] The King, like the other Malukans, is also clearly affectively literate, since he reads in Armusia's "shadowed" face the rhetoric of sadness.[377] In the face of such sadness, the King insists, Armusia must "be merry" (3.2.56) and, echoing Marlowe's *Edward II*, that Armusia will be "me myself, sir, / my better self" (3.2.58-59).[378]

This close affective bond between the King and Armusia persists throughout the play. After he has imprisoned Armusia for his apostasy, the King is distraught. "I am ungrateful and a wretch," he says (5.2.1), and stoops below his station in order to ask: "what shall I do / to deserve of this man?" (5.2.27-28) Calling the bound Armusia onto the stage, the King offers him a tender and passionate chance for release: "Because I love ye tenderly and dearly," he says,

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[376] For more on early modern idealizations of male friendship, see Bray, *The Friend*.

[377] Drawing on cognitive studies notions of extended mind, Nicholas Helms has argued that this sort of "mindreading" is a common element of early modern drama.

[378] DiGangi was the first to note that the king's relationship with Armusia echoes Edward's relationship to Gaveston (*Homoerotics* 157).

"And would be glad to win ye mine, I wish ye, / Even from my heart I wish and woo ye" (5.2.67-69). And though Armusia rejects the King's offer, the King still cannot bring himself to follow the Governor's suggestion that he execute both Armusia and the newly-converted Quisara. "If they go," the King says, "*all* my friends and sisters perish" (5.2.141, emphasis mine).

Each of the relationships that are modulated by the King's love and desire for Armusia—the relationship between the King and Armusia; between Armusia and Quisara; between Quisara and the King; between the King and the Governor; between the King, Rui Dias, and his Portuguese followers; and between the King and Tidore more broadly—constructs and is constructed by a variety of quotidian processes of racialization. Indeed, as this long list of relationships indicates, the King and Armusia's interracial relationship is *the* primary affective node around which this play's various representations of sexual-racialization circle. Occurring at the exact midpoint of the play, the King's declaration that Armusia will be his "better self" is the pivot point of the entire plot. In his reading of this relationship, DiGangi claims that "the production of 'racial' difference in the play, as in early modern texts generally, occurs largely through discourses of nationality (European/Indian), religion (Christian/heathen), and morality (civility/savagery)."[379] While this is not doubt true at the macro-level, at the meso-level we can see that racialization entails an ongoing process of theorizing attachment—both hetero and homo.

[379] DiGangi, *Homoerotics*, 153.

Converting Affects

The racial-sexual conjectures and affective literacies I have tracked throughout *The Island Princess* provide the dramatic foundation for the ideologically charged climax of Fletcher's play: Quisara's demand that Armusia convert to Islam if he is to marry her.[380] Late in the play, Quisara tells Armusia that she knows he is "no coward" and then offers him one last "trial" that he must pass. "If you stand fast now," she says, "I am yours" (4.2.28-30). Armusia quickly declares that there is "nothing, nothing" that he wouldn't do to be with her. "Let me but know, that I may straight fly to it," he says (4.5.32-33). "I'll tell you then," Quisara replies: "change your religion / And be of one belief with me" (4.5.34-35). Taking his incredulous reply—"How?"—to be a question of logistics, Quisara explains that conversion is simple: "Worship our gods," she says, and "renounce that faith you are bred in. / 'Tis easily done: I'll teach ye suddenly / And humbly on your knees—" (4.5.36-38). Armusia, having none of this, spits out a "Ha? I'll be hanged first" (4.5.38). He would do anything for love, apparently, but he won't do that.

Quisara's conversion request fundamentally shifts the affective foundation on which the play's plot had, until this point, been built. This request jolts Armusia out of the love that had guided him to Quisara and literally disorients him in space: "Where have I been?" he asks, "And how forgot myself, how lost my memory?" (4.5.44-45). From Armusia's perspective, Quisara shifts in an instant from the woman for whom he would do anything to "the enemy to my peace" (4.5.49). And though she tries to appeal to his former affect state—"come, come," she says, "I know ye love me" (4.5.50)—Quisara is ultimately unsuccessful at regaining control of the

[380] I have marked Quisara's religion as "Islam" throughout this chapter, but Fletcher presents the Malukan religion as a combination of Islam and various paganisms.

situation. Though she and the rest of the Malukans had been, throughout the play, affectively astute, in this moment of Portuguese anger and incredulity, Quisara's affective literacies break down. Her "I know ye love me" indicates, in the face of Armusia's hateful, xenophobic rhetoric, not an assertion of knowledge, but the admittance of ignorance. But the failure of her affective literacies at this moment, her misunderstanding of Armusia's affect and attachment to her, is a product less of her own shortcomings and more of Armusia's extreme affective volatility. No matter how astute an interpreter she may be, Armusia's shift in tone, affect, and orientation is both unpredictable and uninterpretable; this is precisely what makes his turnabout powerful, since it disrupts the affective framework within which both Armusia and Quisara had negotiated their relationship until this point. If Fletcher's play offers its English audience a "fantasy of colonial and sexual possession," it does so by teaching that audience that such a fantasy is effected via affective volatility.[381]

Ever perceptive, Quisara tries to calm Armusia by appealing to his affective reasoning, bringing theological questions into the realm of feeling. Given his rabid state, it is clear to Quisara that Armusia wants some sort of affective salve, and she offers up her gods as "comforts" that, because they are "great and full of hopes," can secure a stable futurity. Armusia rejects this argument, though, because it is precisely the opposite of his affective desires for the divine. The gods of the Malukans, Armusia says, are "puppets" because "their comforts, like themselves" are "cold, senseless outsides" (4.5.65-67). The Malukans, he claims, imagine their gods as "sick, as we [humans] are, peevish, mad, / Subject to age: and how can they cure us / That are not able to refine themselves?" (4.5.68-70) Far from "comforts," Quisara's gods offer Armusia a sad future in which he is stuck in the morass of negative affect from which he seeks a

[381] Loomba, "Break her will," 68.

"cure." They offer, that is, a continuation of a world in which Armusia is "cold," "senseless," "sick," "peevish," and "mad": all of the affects that shape his own sudden repudiation and racist denigration of Quisara and the Malukans.

Armuisa's next monologue, one of the most passionate defenses of Christianity on the early modern English stage, makes clear that he seeks in religion a form of affective pedagogy. In response to Quisara's claim that the Malukans worship the sun and the moon, he says, in contrast, that he "adore[s] the maker of that sun and moon," the one who "taught their motions" (4.5.74-76). Those celestial bodies, he goes on to say, "are our servants, / Placed there to teach us time, to give us knowledge" (4.5.77-78). Christianity, for Armusia, is the ultimate pedagogical religion, since it imagines a divine teacher past the ken of mortal men, and even of celestial bodies. Nothing, not even his love object, can pull him away from this cosmology, since to do so would not only "bring [his] soul to ruin" but also shatter the affective foundation on which he has built his life (4.5.84). Conversion would require, that is, a radical revision of Armusia's daily affect theories. In fact, far from asking him to convert to Islam, Armusia expected that Quisara would ask *him* to help *her* convert:

> I looked you should have said, 'Make me a Christian:
> Work that great cure'—for 'tis a great one, woman—
> 'That labour truly do perform, that venture:
> The crown of all great trial and the fairest.'
> I looked you should have wept and kneeled to beg it,
> Washed off your mist of ignorance with waters
> Pure and repentant from those eyes. (4.5.85-91)

Armusia has, it is clear, some ability to imagine the affective live of others—he expected, after all, Quisara to be so overcome with a desire for a Christian conversion that she would weep. But his affective imagination is miscalibrated, since it works not like the Malukans', observing and interpreting others. Instead, Armusia's affective imagination works like what we have come to

recognize as a paradigmatic colonial act: he imposes himself, and his projects own affect theories, onto the bodies and imagined desires of others.

Quisara, though, continues to be affectively savvy. In response to this screed, she says:

> I must have ye,
> And to that end I let you storm a little:
> I know there must be some strife in your bosom
> To cool and quiet ye ere you can come back
> I know old friends cannot part suddenly,
> There will be some let still. (4.5.97-101)

She understands that the "strife in" Armusia's "bosom" will lead him to "storm a little" because the affective attachments that had bound Armusia to Christianity before this scene are stronger than this sudden emergence of disgust, since "old friends cannot part suddenly." But Armusia is too far gone; his affect has changed, and thus his racial-sexual relationship to Quisara has as well: "Now I contemn ye and I hate myself," he says, "For looking on that face lasciviously: / And it looks ugly now, methinks" (4.5.104-106). In these lines, the logics of sexual-racialization that I have tracked become wholly explicit. In *The Island Princess,* sexual-racialization follows affect. Quisara is ugly to Armusia because Armusia feels ugly about Quisara. And should this turn to the "ugly" not seem sufficiently racial, Fletcher drives home in the next line the racial disjuncture between this indigenous woman and the Portuguese venturer who supposedly loved her. Quisara responds to Armusia's insult—literally completing his thought by finishing out the line of verse—with a simple: "How, Portugal?" (4.5.106) Where her request that Armusia convert to Islam elicited from him merely a "how," here Quisara underscores the racial stakes of this supposedly logistical incredulity by taking up a word, "Portugal," that has been one of the play's central racial monikers—and one that she has used multiple times to refer to and distance herself from the inferior Rui Dias (1.2.47, 2.6.14) but, strikingly, never before to describe

Armusia.

Armusia responds literally to Quisara's "how" by detailing in even more explicit terms the racist sexual denigration that has been produced by his volatile affective state. Her face "looks like death itself," he says, twisting Quisara's appearance—which had been, at the beginning of the play, explicitly racialized as "fair"—into either the blackness of a devil or a pale white so inhuman as to be excluded from the privileges of whiteness that she had enjoyed until this point (4.5.108). Her eyes are also dark, he says, since they "resemble pale despair" (4.5.109). And his racist denigration extends beyond the visual into the aural, since "in [her] tongue" he "hear[s] fearfully / The hideous murmurs of weak souls" (4.1.110-111). In the context of Armusia's larger monologue, it is clear that these racializations are the *products*, rather than the instigators, of strong negative affect. "I hate and curse ye," Armusia rails, naming the affective origins of his disgust as he claims he will "contemn your deities" and "spurn at their powers" (4.5.114-115).

Though this hatred is sparked by Quisara's conversion request, it is clear that the racializations that attend this hatred are not dependent on the ideological and religious clash of Christianity and Islam, since Armusia has known all along that Quisara is Muslim and was nevertheless happy to participate in the production of her whiteness. Instead, it is the clash of affect theories induced by Quisara's conversion request, and the anger and hatred that this clash produces in Armusia, that leads to his racist denigration of her. Indeed, Armusia's anger is so powerful that he turns not only on Quisara but also on the King, telling Quisara that "although I love your brother, / Let him frown too: I will have my devotion, / And let your whole state storm" (4.5.122-124). Where the play begins with the production of Quisara's racial similitude through Cristófero's sexual desire, it climaxes with the production of Quisara's racial difference

through Armusia's sexual disgust. In this moment, as it has throughout the play, racism takes the form not of a broad discursive strategy of domination, but of the more contingent and extemporaneous affects of white men. In this instance, the racism precedes race as an identity category because the racism is effected via affects that only later seek justificatory apparatuses.

Faith and Fortune

This pattern of rapidly shifting affects is also written into the generic structure of the play itself as it shifts suddenly from tragedy to comedy in its final act. As the King of Tidore imprisons him for his anti-Muslim screed, Armusia's sudden negative reorientation toward the Malukans seeps out into the other Portuguese, including minor characters like Pinheiro's gallant, Pedro, and Armusia's companions, Sousa and Emanuel. "Is this the love they bear us?" Sousa asks his comrades, lamenting Armusia's imprisonment and labelling it "malicious" (5.1.3-4). This imprisonment—"a base, unnatural wrong," in Cristófero's terms (5.1.7)—offers the Portuguese men an opportunity to shore up their masculinity by providing them with a particular affective script of rage and bravado disguised as benign stoicism. Pedro muses, for instance, that "if we be ourselves, honest and resolute, / And continue but masters of our ancient courages" then the Portuguese will prevail (5.1.10-11). But "if we faint or fall a-pieces now," Sousa notes, "we are fools and worthy to be marked for misery" (5.1.13-14). Much like Armusia's vision of a Muslim future wherein he is "cold," "senseless," "sick," "peevish," and "mad" (4.5.67-70), Sousa's vision of a miserable future at the hands of the Malukans—a significant revision of Cristófero's earlier racial subjunctive—is the catalyst for Portuguese male rage. In the face of such a future, Emanuel defiantly remarks that he will "carry coals, then." "I have but one life and one fortune, gentleman," he says, "But I'll so husband it to vex these rascals, / These barbarous slaves" (5.1.17-19). The phrase "barbarous slaves" is one of the fiercest racist epithets in this

play. A significant break from the previous Portuguese visions of interracial intermingling with the Malukans, Emanuel's call to "vex these rascals" marks the turn to an acute and unequivocal racism—one erupting primarily from the rage of a Portuguese man who has been until this moment fairly insignificant to the play.

And while this rage seeps through the ranks of the minor Portuguese characters, it also bubbles up ferociously in more prominent characters. "Plague o'these barbarians," Pinheiro rages, and names explicitly the driving force of the Portuguese racism that is suddenly as explosive as the fireworks on Ternate: "I know ye are angry," he tells the other Portuguese, "So I am too: monstrous angry, gentleman— / I am angry that I choke again" (5.1.25-28). This monstrous anger produces a furious series of derogatory epithets that seek to distance and differentiate—and thus to racialize—the Malukans: "Are not these rascals," he asks, " are they not rogues? (5.1.33-34). But these are not sufficient for Pinheiro. "Think some abominable names," he instructs the Portuguese, "are they not devils? / But the devil's a great deal too good for 'em—fusty villains!" "They are a kind of hounds," Cristófero responds, activating a longstanding racist practice of analogizing people of color to animals.

But, as we have seen, this acute racism is underwritten in the play by a much longer series of meso-level, contingent racializations and racisms driven by whatever affect governs the Portuguese relation to the Malukans at any given moment. Indeed, this racist denigration of the Malukans, driven as it is by anger, will fade immediately after Quisara's conversion to Christianity has shifted the balance of power on the islands. Where the Malukans in this scene are "devils" and "villains," the next time Pinheiro appears on stage he has already reverted to his sexually-driven reverence for Malukan women, swearing on Panura's "white hand" (5.4.32). This rapid shift makes clear that the racism in this play is produced by the volatility of

Portuguese male sexual affect.

The catalyst for this final shift back toward Malukan whiteness, Quisara's baffkung conversion to Christianity, has long concerned critics. Andrea Soloman, for instance, characterizes Quisara's conversion as "an unmotivated capitulation."[382] And indeed, this final gambit of the play does seem to support Nocentelli's claim that "more than a fantasy of imperial and sexual possession . . . *The Island Princess* is a fantasy of erotic conversion that is productive of both sexual and imperial outcomes."[383] But there is some basis, within the logic of play, for Quisara's conversion. As she announces her conversion, Quisara frames it in the terms of the affective literacy that the audience has been primed to see as her characterological hallmark. Apparently she has had enough time to "fasten [her] affections" (2.6.175) to Armusia, and to agree with Pinheiro that "love converts us" (3.1.92).

Quisara lays out her affective interpretation, and the love-driven conversion it produces, to both Armusia and her brother:

> You, that have stepped so nobly
> Into this pious trial, start not now:
> Keep on your way; a virgin will assist ye,
> A virgin won by your fair constancy,
> And, glorifying that she is won so, will die by ye.
> I have touched ye every way: tried ye most honest,
> Perfect and good, chaste—blushing chaste—and temperate,
> Valiant, without vainglory, modest, staid,
> No rage or light affection ruling in you.
> Indeed, the perfect school of worth I find ye,
> The temple of true honour. (5.2.106-116)

Armusia's newfound nobility, it seems, has suddenly cast Quisara out of her place as powerful indigenous princess and into the role of a "virgin" to be "won" by this venturer turned colonial

[382] Solomon, 27.
[383] Nocentelli, 120.

invader—a venturer who is no longer a "Portugal" or "stranger," as he was the last time they were together, but who is now, finally "fair." Quisara is so taken with Armusia here that will she "die by" him—an ambiguous phrase that simultaneously suggests that Quisara will die *alongside* Armusia, that she will be killed "by" his hand, and that he will bring her to orgasm. This role reversal is precipitated by Quisara's skilled interpretation of Amursia's affects. "I have touched ye every way," she says, claiming that she has felt Armusia out, weighing his actions and affects against her own desires. And she has, somehow, found him "most honest, / Perfect and good, chaste" and "temperate."

Given how consistently Quisara has been represented as affectively and politically savvy, it is difficult to account for the fact that she claims she has found "no rage" in Armusia, a character who has in this latter half of the play displayed little except for rage. While it does seem that Fletcher here affirms the nascent European imperial project by valorizing the political power of Christian faith, this shift in Quisara's interpretation of Armusia is so stark that her hyperbolic praise of Armusia's "modesty," and her suggestion that he is the "perfect school of worth" and "the temple of true honour"—hardly epithets he has earned throughout the play—might be read ironically. Nocentelli argues that "far from being a capitulation or even a radical turnabout, Quisara's acceptance of Christianity can be understood as a powerful act of erotic self-determination."[384] She bases this assessment on the fact that Quisara's conversion places her in the role of the "martyred Christian virgin," which, Nocentelli claims, would have been understood by English audiences as "an especially powerful subject position."[385] I would go further to say that Quisara's praise of Armusia and acceptance of Christianity is not only an act

[384] Nocentelli, 136.
[385] ibid., 135.

of religious and *erotic* self-determination, but also a canny attempt to redirect his Portuguese masculine, racist rage into political gain. "I do embrace your faith, sir," she says, "*and your fortune*" (5.2.121, emphasis mine).

This "fortune" is more than Armusia's wealth; it is also, for Quisara, the fate of her country. The equation of faith and fortune suggests that Quisara's conversion is driven less by religious zeal than by political and financial ambition—an ambition, it should be noted, that is less a Machiavellian will to power and more a necessary method of securing indigenous livelihood against the Portuguese who are "all on fire" and poised to attack the Malukans (5.2.79). "I feel a sparkle here," she tells Armusia, "a lively spark that kindles my affection / And tells me it will rise to flames of glory" (5.2.122-124). Repurposing the fire that is both Armusia's method of rescuing her brother and the Portuguese rhetoric for their impending attack on the Malukans, Quisara seduces Armusia by offering him a litany of hyperbolic praise that he has done nothing to deserve.

In so doing, she subtly controls and redirects his affect into a more politically advantageous state. "Let 'em put on their angers," she tells him, referring to her fellow Malukans, and instructs Armusia to instead "suffer nobly" (5.2.125). Offering him the chance to consider her a pedagogical object—"show me the way and, when I faint, instruct me," she says (5.2.126)—Quisara is in fact the one who teaches Armusia to calm his anger as a political tactic. Thinking he has produced this conversion, Armusia—still bound and surrounded by his enemies—rather stupidly replies: "Oh, blessed lady! / Since thou art won, let me begin my triumph" (5.2.127-128). Even as the Portuguese press in at the gate and the Governor suggests that the King hold Armusia for ransom—as a "cure . . . / Against both rage and cannon" (5.2.150-151)—Armusia is so pleased with himself and his newfound bride that, as he is dragged

off stage, he exclaims: "How joyfully I go!" (5.2.156). Just as the anger of Portuguese men was as easy to spark as the "paper houses" (2.3.35) of the Ternateans, this scene, so often read as an ideological fantasy of European superiority at the beginning of the colonial project, in fact suggests that it takes very little to appease and manipulate the volatile affects of white men—and thus very little to shift the racial-sexual terms in which Fletcher's characters, on all sides of the conflict, understand their lives.

The Pedagogies of the Playhouse

Nocentelli claims that interracial romances like *The Island Princess* "taught European men and women what and how to desire."[386] But *which* European men and women? Who was in the audience that learned from this play? *The Island Princess* was first performed on 26 December 1621 at Whitehall before King James and the court. Because Fletcher was the chief dramatist for the King's Men, and because Fletcher and Massinger's *The Sea Voyage,* something of a "companion piece" to *The Island Princess,* was licensed for performance at the Globe in June 1622, it seems likely that Fletcher's play opened publicly soon after its first private performance.[387] In the cold of December, it is probable that the play was performed at the indoor Blackfriars playhouse rather than at the outdoor space of the Globe.

Imagine with me then: in the fading light of late December, 1621, James Curres and Margaret Person bundle themselves up and, perhaps leaving a child or two behind with a friend or family member, head out from their home near the parish church of Holy Trinity the Less where four years earlier, almost to the day, they were married. Strolling west down Knyght Ryder street, Curres pulls his hand from his pocket and slips it into Person's, risking the cold to

[386] Nocentelli, 119.
[387] McManus, 70.

tenderly squeeze his wife's hand. She smiles and leans her head against his shoulder as they walk, slowly, the half-dozen blocks it takes them to get to the Blackfriars theater where they will celebrate this rare afternoon to themselves with a new play by one of London's most popular playwrights. From the windows houses and shops, their neighbors watch this scene of public intimacy, this black man and his white wife, this white woman and her black husband. They are used to the sight—they have watched it over and over for years now—and though some have an easier time tolerating an interracial marriage than others, this couple has become another part of the London landscape. Curres and Person aren't the only ones, after all, who stroll down this road, black hand in white hand—Randall Blackmore and Elizabeth Seagood, married just a few blocks south at St. Benet, have, by now, been together for a few years. And then there was Lancelott Blackman and Mary Bragg who had married that same year over at St. Mary's. They had seen John Steele running around the neighborhood with Francis Blackmore, too, and some took bets that they would be married by this time next year.[388]

When Curres and Person take their seats at the theater, a bell rings, and three white men take the stage, dressed like merchants—rosaries, perhaps, wrapped around their wrists to mark their Catholicism.[389] One of the men orders the ports opened and the "watch relieved," cautioning care for the guards who should keep their "vigilant eyes fixed" on some "islanders" who have yet to materialize (1.1.1-3). And though they know he is not speaking to them, exactly, Curres and Person follow this man's instructions: they do take care, they do fix their eyes on the stage, their breaths bated as they wait to see these "false and desperate people" from islands halfway around the world (1.1.4). Their hearts beat faster as before their eyes a white man sets

[388] Habib, 340-342.
[389] The stage direction for the top of the play reads: *A bell rings* (1.1).

fire to a town in order to win the hand of a woman who, though she may sometimes be "fair," is clearly *not* European.[390] They watch, that night, an interracial romance—one predicated, just like theirs, on a conversion to Christianity—succeed. As they leave the theater, they are fortified against the December chill by the knowledge that the "island princess" and her white man are together, as they are together, against all odds. That there are "no more guns now nor hates, but joys and triumphs / And universal gladness" (5.591-92). They know this gladness is not truly universal—they know to look for hates around each corner they turn—but they are happy to suspend this knowledge, at least for this night, as they walk home, hand in hand, whispering to each other, "I have touched ye every way" (5.2.111), and imagining the touches yet to come.

It is impossible to know if James Curres and Margaret Person—or Randall Blackmore and Elizabeth Seagood, or Lancelott Blackman and Marry Bragg, or John Steele and Francis Blackmore, or all of those whose names were never set in ink—saw *The Island Princess* that winter in the theater just down the street, or if they crossed the river to the Globe to see it in the spring. But it isn't unreasonable to conjecture that they, or people like them, might have.[391] "People like them"—interracial couples, or men and women with interracial desires, or all sorts of people, both Londoners and those visiting, who had desires that did not follow the inchoate scripts of domestic heterosexuality that Nocentelli compellingly argues were both incipient forms of white supremacy and the ideological product of interracial romances like Fletcher's play. "Interracial marriages," she claims, "were tales of domestic heterosexuality, the main

[390] Having seen the play three times, Pepys writes in his diary entry for 7 January 1669 that there was a "good scene of a town on fire" (McManus 73).

[391] Similarly, as part of a partnership between the "Before Shakespeare" project and the "Travel, Transculturality, and Identity in England, c. 1550-1700 (TIDE)," Callan Davies and Haig Smith have written about the immigrant community—including black immigrants—living in the neighborhood of St. Boltoph's without Bishopsgate. Bishopsgate is quite far from the Blackfriar's and the Globe theatres, but it is not far from the earlier playhouses, the Curtain and the Theatre, which were in use during the 1580-90s.

purpose of which was to celebrate eros and smooth over the many anxieties that accompanied the institutionalization of desire within marriage."[392] This was, surely, the lesson some audience members took away from the theater: that white was right, and that white Christian desires would, in the end, win—at home and afar.

But plays—all those bodies on stage and in the audience, all those "vigilant eyes fixed" on each other, all those touches and almost touches, the heat of the fire and the heat of desire—have a way of meaning too much, of exceeding and escaping their "purpose." *The Island Princess* offered its audiences not merely a fantasy of faraway islands, but also representations of lives that were lived in sexual conjecture and the racial subjunctive; in the interpretation and manipulation of various affects; and in the contingencies of desires—both hetero and homo, both inter- and intraracial—whose names were written on-the-fly, whose terms were negotiated in the moment. For some audience members, Fletcher's play offered the familiar sting of racist denigrations; for others, it offered lessons in denigrating; for still others, following Quisara's lead, it offered strategies for resisting the production and exploitation of racism. For some audience members, the play offered a language for, and thus the possibility of, a male-male desire that—whether consummated or not—was palpable and felt present. For others, it offered methods for subjunctively inhabiting imagined sexual scenarios—for conjecturing about and projecting not only the sex that others may be having, but also the sex that they themselves might have. For others still, Fletcher's play offered the titillating promise of sex and swashbuckling across the sea, and the impetus to get on a ship to chase that promise. But for each member of that multifarious group of spectators crowded into the playhouse to scratch the thousand different itches they brought with them, *The Island Princess* spun out myriad desire lines, and various

[392] Nocentelli, 118.

pedagogies they might employ in the lives they would lead outside of the playhouse. For their many differences, such pedagogies entangled race, sexuality, and affect into something like scripts for living.

Epilogue

From Norm to Life

In life, as in the playhouse, scripts change. In the three-hundred years separating the present moment from the end of the period of sexual history I have been concerned with in this dissertation, people will find myriad new ways to practice sex, and to relate to those whom they desire (or wish they didn't)—including the formulation of what we now think of as sexual "identities." Without any wish to flatten all sexual experience into an historical constant, it is my hope that the concept of the "sex life" that I have outlined in these pages will prove useful to historians of sexuality who know more than I ever will about those three-hundred years—not to mention the thousands that precede the two centuries on which I have focused. The horizons of sexual possibility at any given time and place may not be reducible to the same set of analyses, terms, concepts, or—thank goodness!—scripts. But sex will, however it is organized, inevitably have some relation to life. I hope that the "sex life" might prove useful, then, not as a theory about how people are or should be, but as a hermeneutic—a tool—for understanding how we and the historical subjects we study might organize our lives.

When I have had the opportunity to describe this project to others, I have said that I was writing a dissertation about how early moderns learned how to have sex. Almost invariably the response has been: did they have to *learn*? If I have accomplished nothing else in these pages, I hope I have offered a trenchant and resounding: yes. Yes, they had to learn—and yes, *we* have to learn—everything there is to know about sex. But old habits of thought die hard. As Tiffany Ball

has recently argued, models of instinct and libido continue to structure contemporary sexual criticism and history, despite years of queer resistance to such naturalizing frames.[393] Expanding on her insightful critique of such models, my project poses a pointedly practical question: why should it be the case that we would readily admit that each of us has to learn how to walk, and yet somehow not recognize that sex, too, is a learned skill, a learned way of relating to others and being in the world?

This willful forgetting of sexual pedagogy is one way in which quotidian sexual knowledges become what Foucault calls "subjugated knowledges," which are, he says, "knowledges that have been disqualified as nonconceptual knowledges, as insufficiently elaborated knowledges: naive knowledges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition of scientificity."[394] The sexual-logistical and affective knowledges that I have elaborated in these pages fall far "below the required level of erudition of scientificity." Which is to say, as I have insisted in another idiom throughout this dissertation: they do not rise to the level of "discourse."

As I have read widely across early modern literature, I have tried to remain attentive to the ways in which texts record the exchange and use of "subjugated" sexual knowledges. I have called my practice a "meso-level" analysis in an attempt to differentiate it from what I see as the traditional historicist practice of dispersing particular literary texts into a broad, discursive network—a practice that attempts to, among other things, raise imaginative texts to "the required level of erudition of scientificity." The turn to this sociological descriptor is purposeful: a meso-level analysis is different from, but, importantly, *related to*, a micro- or a macro-level analysis.

[393] See Ball, *Weak Feelings*.
[394] Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 7.

The meso-level is not a free-floating set of concepts and practices, but one part of a larger system of thought. One of the primary goals of this dissertation has been to anatomize, as clearly as I could, the interactions of the various levels of that larger system. I have focused on the meso-level not because it is more important than the micro- or macro-, but because it is, in my reading of the field, the least theorized.

At times, though, my focus on a meso-level analytic may seem to dismiss other levels of analysis—particularly those macro-level analyses that I have marked as "discursive." A reader might reasonably ask: by concentrating on individually-accumulated knowledges, have I not reduced concepts and issues which are systemic to the minute practices of particular actors? This question is particularly pressing when it comes to my analyses of racism in the second and fourth chapters, since anti-racist scholars and activists have long had to combat the notion that racism is unique to a set of "bad actors," rather than a systemic and structural issue.

Where critical race theorists have stressed the need to understand contemporary racism without racists, I have attempted to articulate, at a very different historical moment, the critical and political purchase of understanding race with racism, and with racism at various different levels of analysis.[395] My goal in claiming, for instance, that the sexual desires and frustrations of the Portuguese venturers in John Fletcher's *The Island Princess* produce racist speech acts that, in turn, produce racial difference has not been to claim that, were these Portuguese characters simply less racist, race would not emerge in their interactions with the Malukans. My point is, instead, that within the much larger systems of international travel, trade, exchange, dalliance, and, ultimately, colonization lie individuals whose desires and actions are the *quotidian* avenues through which racism, and thus race, impinge on the lives of other individuals. By focusing on

[395] For "racism without racists," see Bonilla-Silva.

the emergence of racism and race in individual sexual interactions, that is, I have focused on a meso-level of a much larger racial system. If we were to take away these particular Portuguese venturers, we would not take away racism; we would take away one of the avenues of racism's expression, and thus one of the many points of origin for the notion of "race" more broadly. Much the same could be said of my other analyses of sexuality. It has not been my goal to evacuate macro-level categories like "sodomy" of their social and political meaning, but to specify the daily practices through which those broader meanings create the conditions within which early moderns lived. In short, I do not mean to contract our systematic analyses; I mean to expand them, and to more clearly analyze the various avenues through which they emerge in daily life.

Regardless of my analytic intentions, though, this project lies athwart the theoretical and political fields which engendered it. Given the current field formation of queer studies in the United States, for instance, it would be difficult to recognize this dissertation as a queer project. Sure, I may place male-male and female-female sexual desire and practice on par with male-female sexual desire and practice and, sure, I may denaturalize penis-in-vagina sex by insisting on that practice's logistical and epistemological contingencies. But what is my *critique*? How do I perform the opposition to the norm that is queer theory's hallmark?

It is true that there is surprisingly little critique in these pages. When I have critiqued at all, I have critiqued the scholarly practices and impulses—particular protocols for glossing critical editions, for instance, or the overreliance on the term "homoeroticism"—that insist that sex is only important insofar as it can be made to signify within the context of "the social" writ large. Otherwise, save for my opposition in the final chapter to what I see as an inchoate white supremacy's leveraging of affective volatility as a racist tool, I have had nothing to say about sex

or sexuality by way of critique. Instead, I have simply tried to describe.

I hope that the descriptions that this dissertation comprises are one answer to a question posed by Robyn Wiegman and Elizabeth A. Wilson: "what does queer inquiry do when its critical vigor is constituted by something other than an axiomatic opposition to norms?"[396] It seems to me that my intuitive turn to the descriptive has been driven by an intuition that, though they are governed by norms, sex lives are variegated and complex in ways that ask more from scholars than an anti-normative critique. This has felt especially pressing to me in our current political climate, where "norms" and "normalization" seem like paltry tools for analyzing the erratic mechanics of state power, certainly, if not power more generally. Rather than positioning myself against norms, then, I have positioned myself for life. Indeed, the category of "life"—not as a biopolitical tool, but as a lived experience; not as ontology, but as phenomenology—has seemed to me to be so conceptually vibrant as to demand its own analytic protocols. While I think the political aims of my project are largely aligned with those queer scholars who take anti-normativity as their primary path to justice—we all want to bring about the conditions of possibility for queer flourishing—I do think my project differs from many anti-normative queer projects in its emphases, and, I hope, in its affects. And this process of shifting my focus from norms to life has been pedagogical for me: I have learned to *feel* differently. I hope readers of this dissertation will be able to sense that it is driven less by skepticism and anger—righteous feelings though they are—and more by joy, surprise, and hope, those affects that may seem to produce "naive knowledges" not worthy of being qualified as properly conceptual.

Turning from norms and toward life, I have excavated and analyzed various forms of sexual knowledge. The first chapter's delineation of the sexual-logistical knowledge implicit in

[396] Wiegman and Wilson, 20.

penis-guiding; the second chapter's examination of the material conditions of sexual logistics, and the knowledges visible in the use of lubricants; the third chapter's recognition of the affect theories that undergird the interpretation and experience of everyday life—not to mention the knotty and often disappointing emotional entanglements of sexual and romantic relationships; and the fourth chapter's analysis of the ways that these affect theories are both the products and producers of concepts like "gender" and "race" as they emerge in the sex lives of interracial couples: each of these marks an attempt to desubjugate a whole host of quotidian sexual knowledges that—because they do not rise to the level of discourse, because they fall "below the required level of erudition of scientificity"—have not yet been recognized *as* knowledges, but that nevertheless were foundational to early modern lives.

What I have articulated here is, I hope, only a first step. The "sex life" is too broad a concept to be fully explicated in any single dissertation or monograph. Others may wish to take up the sex life's temporal extension—the way it sprawls across a lifetime, changing as the other conditions of one's life change. How might, for instance, literary critics approach the sex represented in texts that are known to have been written across a wide swath of time—epic poems, for instance, or sonnet sequences, or (in a later period) serial novels—if we keep in mind that the sex lives of those texts' authors were changing across that time? How might focusing on a specific age group (children, say, or the elderly) shape our understanding of the sex life? Others still might wish to take up the physiological and mental differences that shape any given individual's logistical and affective possibilities for sexual practice; disability studies will be a particularly fecund site for asking such questions. And there is surely more to be said about the imbrications of race and the sex life—especially from the point of view of people of color, whose voices have emerged in this dissertation only through the mediation of white authors.

As in so many realms of my life and work, Eve Sedgwick lies just below the surface of this dissertation. Early in her first monograph, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions,* Sedgwick articulates the delightfully practical goal she has set for herself. "I want to make it easier," she says, "for the reader of 'respectable' nineteenth-century novels to write 'Gothic' in the margin next to certain especially interesting passages, and to make that notation with a sense of linking specific elements in the passage with specific elements in the constellation of Gothic conventions."[397]

I have a similar goal for this dissertation. I want to make it easier for readers of early modern literature—and, really, readers of any literary description of sex and sexual knowledge—to write not merely "sex" or "sodomy" in the margins next to any given passage, but to write "sex life," and to do so with a sense of activating a whole host of questions: "where did they learn to do this?," for instance, or "what would they have to be feeling in order to say this?" A whole host of questions, that is, about the sex lives of the early moderns.

[397] Sedgwick, *Gothic Conventions*, 4.

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